



REV. DONALD MACFARLANE.

MEMOIR, DIARY, & REMAINS

OF THE

Rev. DONALD MACFARLANE,
DINGWALL.

BY THE

Rev DONALD BEATON,
Minister of the Free Presbyterian Church, Wick.

Inverness

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PREFACE.

IN issuing this Memoir of the Rev. Donald Macfarlane to the public it is my duty to make acknowledgment of the help received from various quarters. During Mr Macfarlane's later years, Mr Kenneth Maciver, Strathpeffer, received from him and noted down much important information in connection with Mr Macfarlane's life and ecclesiastical career. This material has been largely drawn on in writing the Memoir, so that it may be said to be to a great extent autobiographical. To Mr Maciver also readers are indebted for the transcription of the Diary which is printed in this volume. Thanks are also tendered to the Rev. Donald Mackinnon, Portree, for supplying extracts from the Skye Free Church Presbytery Records, and to Captain Macintyre, Lochyside, Banavie, for sending extract of Minutes from Kilmallie Free Church Kirk-Session Records. Acknowledgment also has to be made for the help received from Rev. Neil Cameron, Glasgow, whose long and intimate friendship with Mr Macfarlane and his knowledge of the ecclesiastical movements referred to in these pages made his help specially useful.

The Sermons reprinted in this volume appeared in the earlier volumes of the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, and as these are now out of print and difficult to obtain, it was thought advisable that a selection of them should be reprinted.

In sending forth this volume, our prayer is that the Lord, whom Mr Macfarlane served loyally through grace, may bless the record of a life that was devoted to His service, for the edification of His Church and for the awakening of sinners.

D. BEATON.

WICK, 11th March, 1929.

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MEMOIR OF THE Rev. DONALD MACFARLANE.

CHAPTER I.

Birthplace.—Parents.—His Early Education.—Uiskeva School.—Mr MacColl's Sermon and its Lasting Impression.—His Appointment to Lochmaddy Society School.—Encounter with the Parish Minister.—Captain Otter's Recommendation.—At College.—Licensed.—Meets Dr Kennedy at Dunoon.—Ordination and Induction at Strathconan (6th January, 1876).—Tempted with Atheism.

DONALD MACFARLANE was born at Vallay, North Uist, in the year 1834. His father and mother were natives of the Isle of Skye. Mr Donald Macfarlane, his father, acted for years as the manager of farms on the estate of Colonel Gordon of Cluny, Aberdeenshire, who was at that time proprietor of South Uist and Barra. His mother's name was Elizabeth; she was a daughter of Alexander Macdonald, Trotternish, Skye. There was a family of six sons to the marriage—of whom Mr Macfarlane was the fourth.

He received the first rudiments of education from his eldest brother, Angus, who taught a school at Frobost, South Uist. When his brother gave up teaching he was taught at home by his father. During the time that his father acted as manager of the farm of Dremisdale, South Uist, Mr Macfarlane attended the parish school for a year. On his father leaving South

Uist to take up a farm in Benbecula Mr Macfarlane's educational progress was interrupted, as there was no school in the place at the time, and so he had to fall back again on home instruction. In 1850, however, through the efforts of the "Ladies' Society for the Religious Improvement of the Remote Highlands and Islands," a school was set up at Uiskeva, Benbecula. In his *Memoir and Remains of Rev. D. Macdonald, Shieldaig*, Mr Macfarlane has an interesting reference to this school and its first teacher, Mr Donald Macdonald, afterwards Free Church minister of Shieldaig, who became his life-long friend and stood by him in 1893. "The coming of a teacher to this remote district," says Mr Macfarlane, "was hailed by the inhabitants with joy and gratitude. It was a great boon, and a wonderful providence. The school was begun without delay in one end of a dwelling-house until a proper school was built. All the children of school age at Uiskeva and the neighbouring townships came to be taught, and even grown-up lads and girls were among the pupils. The most of these were never at school before. There were, however, a few of them at school elsewhere, and these could read and write fairly. All the common branches of education taught in other schools were taught in the 'Ladies' Schools,' and in the case of advanced scholars who wished to prosecute their studies at College, the rudiments of the higher branches were also taught, such as Latin and Greek. But as the object of the Society was chiefly to communicate religious instruction to the young, the Bible and Shorter Catechism had a prominent place in the schools. While Mr Macdonald was competent to teach all secular branches required in this school, he was eminently fitted

to conduct the religious department, as he was himself taught of the Lord, and deeply anxious for the spiritual good of the young. He acted as a missionary as well as a schoolmaster" (*Memoir and Remains of Rev. D. Macdonald, Shieldaig*, p. 13). After two years this school was closed and another opened at Griminish in the west side of the Island. Owing to this change Mr Macfarlane's education was again interrupted, as the distance from Uiskeva to Griminish was too great. His parents, however, were interested in his education, and he was sent to another school in the Island until he was qualified to act as a substitute for Mr Macdonald. In 1856, when Mr Macdonald, who was now teaching at Stoneybridge, South Uist, went south to attend the University, Mr Macfarlane was appointed his substitute. It was during this winter that the great change took place which changed the whole current of his life. The occasion was a sermon preached on the Monday of the Communion at North Uist by the Rev. Alexander MacColl, then of Duirinish, Skye, and afterwards of Lochalsh. In his closing words, this honoured ambassador of Christ made an arresting exhortation. In his diary Mr Macfarlane says he would never forget the fervent and faithful appeal made by the preacher. He asked: "Is there any young man in the audience that will come to Christ?" At this time Mr Macfarlane did not know what coming to Christ meant, but he felt that he was the young man addressed by the preacher. From that day he began to seek fellowship with the Lord's people and to shun the fellowship of the world. To him this was a time of love, and the recollection of it in after days cheered and warmed his heart. The impression made on him at this time was

deepened through reading tracts left in the schoolhouse by Mr Macdonald. Some of these dealt with the necessity of being born again, and these sent him to search his Bible with more attention and interest than he had ever given to it before. His sense of the sinfulness of his nature was deepened and became so vivid to his own mind that he imagined others were seeing him as he saw himself, but he discovered in speaking to them that this was not the case. So real was his sense of sin that he began to speak to his neighbours on the danger of their lost condition and to exhort them to forsake their evil ways. If he refrained from rebuking sin he felt guilt on his conscience. As time went on he became more and more enlightened in the knowledge of Christ as the only Saviour of sinners. He could mention many passages of Scripture which gave him peace, but he was indebted to the whole history of the Gospel in being enabled to close in with Christ as a lost sinner in need of God's great salvation. In his letters to his friend, Mr Macdonald, Mr Macfarlane did not conceal the great change which had taken place. On Mr Macdonald's return from college, he persuaded Mr Macfarlane to stay with him in the schoolhouse during the summer months. Mr Macdonald's spiritual conversation and prayers were a great help and blessing to him. During these months Mr Macdonald taught him the rudiments of Greek, a language in which Mr Macfarlane had special delight, as the language chosen by the Holy Spirit in which the New Testament was originally written. His interest in this beautiful language, so signally honoured by the Holy Spirit, soon made him expert in understanding it, and throughout life he took delight in reading his Greek New Testament. When the

time for the return of Mr Macdonald to his university classes came round Mr Macfarlane was again left in charge of the school at Stoneybridge. Before he began his university studies Mr Macfarlane acted as substitute at a number of other schools. Ere he entered college Mr Macfarlane decided to go south to earn some money for the prosecution of his studies. On the evening of the day he left home he arrived at Lochmaddy, resolving to cross the Minch to Skye by the mail packet, a sailing boat. A storm rising during the night, the packet could not leave the harbour. Mr Macfarlane was keenly disappointed at the delay. To pass the time he went to see a friend, who, in the course of conversation, said that it was a pity Mr Macfarlane had not been there yesterday, as the Rev. Norman Macleod, minister of the Free Church, Paible, had been at Lochmaddy making arrangements for the Society School there, which was vacant. So great a difficulty had been found in getting teachers to remain that the Established Church minister (Mr Macdonald) at Trumisgarry at last told the people that he was tired trying to get teachers for the school and that he was now leaving it with themselves to get a teacher. As the people belonged to the Free Church, they intimated that they would like a Free Church teacher. The minister told them he did not care what denomination the teacher belonged to if he would teach the scholars. Mr Macfarlane's friend asked him if he would be willing to remain with them if appointed. Mr Macfarlane replied that he would. The Rev. Norman Macleod was at once communicated with—Mr Macfarlane himself being the bearer of the letter. He returned with a letter from Mr Macleod strongly recommending the people at Lochmaddy to appoint Mr

Macfarlane as their teacher. The people willingly made the appointment. Mr Macfarlane not only taught on week days, but kept a Sabbath School and conducted religious meetings on Sabbath. This was something that the parish minister had not reckoned on, and he set about to have Mr Macfarlane ousted. He applied to the S.P.C.K.* (Society for Propagation of Christian Knowledge) to have a teacher of his own denomination appointed, and the Society granted him his request. When the new teacher came he was accompanied to the school by the parish minister, who asked Mr Macfarlane to give up the key of the schoolhouse. Mr Macfarlane refused, and said if he was compelled to give it up he would give it to the person from whom he received it. The minister said he was sorry to deprive him of the school, but that it had to be done. Mr Macfarlane told him that he did not believe he was sorry. The minister now tried a new tack, and asked him if he would like to be a teacher in connection with the Established Church. On receiving an answer in the negative, the minister asked him what he had against the Established Church. Mr Macfarlane replied that he had several things against the Established Church; among others, he might mention that communicants were admitted to the Lord's table without being examined as to whether they were converted or not. To this the minister replied that the children of Israel in Egypt ate the flesh of the paschal lamb and that no one was prohibited from the Passover, and that ministers had no right to debar any one from the Lord's table. Mr Macfarlane met him by saying that Moses was charged by God to debar the ignorant,

* This Society maintained a number of schools throughout the Highlands.

the uncircumcised and the stranger from the Passover. This reply brought the argument to an end. The minister again expressed his sorrow at the necessity of depriving Mr Macfarlane of the school. "You are not sorry at all, Mr Macdonald," came the straightforward reply, "and the reason is that you saw a spark of the Gospel lighted at Lochmaddy and you are trying to extinguish it, but you cannot do it; and let me tell you that if you do not stop your evil work that your end in this world will be miserable."

Though these events all seemed to have a dark side, yet the Lord was shaping the road by which Mr Macfarlane would reach college, as the following will show.

One of the officers, Captain Otter, R.N., who was engaged with Captain Thomas in survey work in the Western Isles, and who was interested in the religious welfare of the people, on making inquiries at Lochmaddy if they had any one to conduct religious meetings was informed of what had happened. The Captain noted Mr Macfarlane's name in his notebook. He then wrote to the Ladies' Society, in which he was interested, and recommended that Mr Macfarlane should be appointed at once to the school at Grimsay, North Uist. He was accordingly appointed immediately as substitute at Grimsay, and afterwards as teacher in full charge at Eriskay, South Uist, where he taught for two years before he went to college and for a few years afterwards. The ordinary rule of the Ladies' Society was that no teacher could be employed by them until he was one year at college. Through Captain Otter's influence this obstacle was removed out of the way for Mr Macfarlane. After teaching for a few years he had now sufficient money to pay his way for the first session at college.

The storm and the persecution he met with were not indications of the Lord's displeasure, but part of that divine purpose in which the divine wisdom was seen clearly triumphing over what men would regard as signs of God's disapproval of a course on which he was yet to manifestly set His seal of approval.

He began his college course in 1863, and finished his divinity course ten years later. The length of time taken was due to the rule laid down by the Ladies' Society that their teachers should remain at least two years in charge of their school without going to college. In the university the Humanity (Latin) and Greek Chairs were occupied by the distinguished classical scholars, Prof. William Ramsay and Prof. Lushington. While under the latter he made a special study of Greek. His other professors were men of the first rank in their respective spheres—Prof. Veitch in Logic; Prof. Edward Caird in Moral Philosophy; and Prof. Sir William Thomson (afterwards Lord Kelvin) in Natural Philosophy.

He took his theology course at Glasgow Free Church College, where he had as his professors: Principal Fairburn, Prof. Islay Burns (a brother of the saintly Chinese missionary. William C. Burns), Prof. (afterwards Principal) Douglas, and Prof. James Candlish (a son of Dr R. Candlish). During his time at this college there were two students from Bohemia and one from Germany who came to study theology in Scotland because of the rationalistic teaching of their own theological professors.

His entry on college studies marked the beginning of those negotiations for union between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches that were to cause so much grief to many of the Lord's people in Scotland.

It was the beginning of sorrows for the Free Church. The first union negotiations came to an end in 1873, the year that Mr Macfarlane finished his studies. He used to tell a story in connection with Dr Adam, one of the leaders for union, but whose policy it was to gather the half-and-halves so that the opponents of union would be bereft of their votes. On the occasion in question, Donald Cattanach, Badenoch, was present, and on being asked after Dr Adam's motion at the Glasgow Presbytery had been carried if he intended following Dr Adam, "No!" replied the clear-sighted worthy, "It is enough for me to have fallen in Adam once and I do not wish to fall in Adam a second time."

During his college course Mr Macfarlane worshipped for the most part in Hope Street Free Gaelic Church, where the worthy servant of Christ, Rev. Alexander Urquhart, was minister. Sometimes he went to hear Dr Samuel Miller, one of Glasgow's great preachers, and for whom Mr Macfarlane had great respect. In those times, as he states in his memoir of Mr Macdonald, it was not difficult to get preachers whose teaching ministered to the souls of their hearers. Among some of the others whose ministrations he used to attend occasionally were Dr Forbes, Dr Andrew A. Bonar, and Rev. Ralph Smith. There were also at that time many of the Lord's true people with whom fellowship could be had in the great city of the West of Scotland.

Mr Macfarlane was licensed by the Presbytery of Skye and Uist at Snizort, 24th June, 1874. After being licensed he laboured in several places as a probationer for two years. His first sphere of labour was at Dunoon, and it was while here he had the privilege of first meeting Dr Kennedy, Dingwall, though

he had often heard him preach. The Doctor had come to Dunoon for the purpose of opening a church for the Gaelic portion of the congregation. During his stay there he resided with his sister, the widow of the late Rev. Hugh Mackay, Kilmun. On Monday Dr Kennedy sent for Mr Macfarlane. The thought of meeting the famous preacher filled Mr Macfarlane with a feeling of shyness. He was not long in his presence when the shyness vanished, as he found the Doctor to be a humble Christian and as gentle as a lamb, showing kindness to and fatherly interest in him. On parting, the Doctor said: "We shall know each other better yet."

On leaving Dunoon Mr Macfarlane acted as probationer at Bernera (Harris), Carr-Bridge, Ballachulish and Lawers (Perthshire). His next place was Strathconan, where he had been asked to go by the Highland Committee of the Free Church. This appointment was due to Dr Kennedy, who had recommended Mr Macfarlane. The people decided to give him a call, and on 6th January, 1876, he was ordained and inducted as first Free Church minister at Strathconan. Since the Disruption this congregation had been without a minister—the religious services being conducted by laymen. Among some of the outstanding men were Hector Jack and Duncan Maciver. The latter, who had a high reputation among the people, was noted for his meekness, but had passed away before Mr Macfarlane was inducted. It is related after his first Communion at Strathconan that Dr Kennedy, who assisted, asked a friend: "Do you know the young man who has become minister of Strathconan?" On receiving an answer in the negative, Dr Kennedy said: "Do you know that I felt quite ashamed of myself while listening to his

prayers at family worship in his own house." Strathconan at this date belonged to the Right Hon. Arthur James (now Earl) Balfour, M.P., who took an interest in the welfare of the people. He built a manse at his own expense, besides contributing handsomely to the Sustentation Fund. With the exception of a few, all the people were connected with the Free Church. Miss Balfour and Miss Faithful, a lady companion, were regular attenders while resident at Strathconan during Mr Macfarlane's ministry. The resident congregation at Strathconan was not large—about 200—but the people were very attentive on attending the means of grace. Besides preaching on the Sabbath and conducting a weekly prayer meeting, Mr Macfarlane also catechised during the winter months. There is an entry in his diary relating to the time of his Strathconan ministry which may be quoted here: "I was much harassed in my mind with temptations all the time while in Strathconan. There was one temptation which followed me and brought me very low in soul and body, viz., atheism. This temptation began before I left college and continued to torment me for full three years. The only time of relief from it was when I was preaching. It would then flee away, but as soon as I would leave the church the awful flood would return, threatening to sweep away all my hope. Yet, I was sure in my mind that there was, and is, a God even in the midst of the flood, and that it was a temptation from the evil one. It left me as weak as a feather before the tempest. It was only gradually I got rid of it. By the time that I was under call to Moy it was getting less frequent and weaker and weaker, and after the change to Moy it left me for some time."

CHAPTER II.

Call to Moy.—Outstanding “Men.”—Monthly “Question Meeting.”—His Marriage.—Mr Finlay’s Bill.—Letter on Robertson Smith Case—Letter on Disestablishment.—Call to Kilmallie.—Letter to North Uist Congregation.—Call to Daviot.—Mr Walter Campbell.—Extracts from Diary.—His Successor at Moy: Liberty in Preaching.—Declaratory Act.—Meeting of Elders in Spring of 1892.—Act passed in May, 1892.—Protest by Kilmallie Kirk Session.—Letter by Mr Macfarlane.

AFTER three years and a half ministry at Strathconan Mr Macfarlane received a call from the Free Church congregation of Moy and Dalarossie to succeed the Rev. John Baillie, which he accepted. He was inducted to his new charge in 1879. Dr Kennedy introduced him to his congregation on the first Sabbath after his induction. In giving advice to the people after the sermon, he told them that they had now a true servant of Christ, and they should be very careful how they dealt with him and the message he delivered to them. He warned that if any of them troubled him the Lord would show His displeasure, which was manifestly seen in one case. There were a number of godly men and women in the parish at this time. Notably among the men may be mentioned John Rose, Alexander Fraser, Donald Macgillivray, Duncan Shaw, and latterly Murdo Mackenzie. John Rose, who had studied at the university, was afterwards schoolmaster of Beauuly, where his memory is still affectionately cherished by his old pupils. On retiring from teaching he made his

home at Moy and became an elder there. As a man of education and outstanding piety he was very helpful to the congregation when the minister was absent from his pulpit. Mr Rose died shortly after the separation in 1893, and before his death he expressed his thankfulness to God for being spared to see the stand made for the truth in 1893 and that he was privileged to sit at the Lord's table at Inverness in a pure Church. A few days after he passed from the table below to join with the saints in heaven. Alexander Fraser, another of the elders, was a man of prayer who had the secret of the Lord. He was brought to the knowledge of the truth under the preaching of the Rev. Archibald Cook. He also rejoiced in the stand made in 1893, and was a faithful and useful member of the Church to the end of his life.

During the time of Mr Macfarlane's ministry there was a monthly "Question Meeting" held at Moy, at which "the men" of the congregation spoke to "the question" submitted by one of the brethren. Some of the Duthil "men" attended this meeting occasionally, among them being the godly Duncan Fraser, Carr-Bridge. Alexander Cattanach, Badenoch, was often a visitor to Moy. He was a living and lovable Christian and much given to prayer, and Mr Macfarlane remarked that he often felt on his spirit the presence of Alexander when he came to the parish. On Communion occasions he used to preside over the prayer meetings at Moy. There was no night sermon on the Sabbath at this time in Moy. The Rev. Alexander MacColl used to remark in reference to these prayer meetings, which he highly approved: "The Pauls who plant are needed, but the Apolloses who water are as needful."

It was while at Moy Mr Macfarlane was married in April, 1880, to Mary, eldest daughter of Alexander Morrison, Solas, North Uist, an outstanding elder of the Free Church. Mrs Macfarlane proved a true helper to him through all his trials and afflictions. She passed away two years after her husband at Kinloid, Larkhall, the residence of her brother, Dr Morrison, 9th December, 1928, and was buried beside her husband at Dingwall.

During his Moy ministry a Bill was brought before Parliament by Mr (afterwards Lord) Finlay, the member for the Inverness Burghs, for the reconstruction of the Church of Scotland, and it had Mr Macfarlane's entire support, as will be seen from the following reference:—"I believe it would, if passed into law, put the Church of Scotland on a Scriptural basis. I entirely differ from Mr McQueen, Daviot, and Mr Mackay, Dores, in their sweeping condemnation of it, and I am as firm as ever in my opposition to disestablishment, and the removal of such eminent leaders as Dr Begg, Dr Kennedy, and Dr Mackay from the battlefield makes me see the greater need for adhering steadfastly to the principles for which they so faithfully and honestly contended, and I would feel thankful if I saw the Scriptural relation between Church and State restored, though I feel more concerned about the principle of establishment than any pecuniary benefits accruing from it."

In the year 1880 the case of Professor Robertson Smith came before the Commission of Assembly. It greatly agitated the Church and ended in his suspension, and this caused great discontent among his supporters. As might be expected, Mr Macfarlane voted for his

suspension, and the following letter by him, published in the *Inverness Courier*, shows the stand he took against the discontented party:—"Sir,—From repeated reports of newspapers it appears that the decision of the last Commission of Assembly in the case of Professor Smith has caused a great deal of excitement in many quarters, especially in Elgin, Aberdeen, Greenock, Glasgow, and other places. This, in my opinion, shows that Satan is angry because the progress of his wicked attacks on the blessed Word of God have been so far arrested; and it is very sad to think that he should get so many supporters or sympathisers among professing Christians. Let those who so boldly take the side of the man that has done so much to shake the faith of precious and immortal souls in the Bible take heed lest their present audacity be turned into trembling and confusion when they shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ to be judged by the inspired Word of God, which they now seem to regard so little. It is no new thing in the history of the Church to see members of Parliament, bailies, lawyers, and others holding responsible offices in the Church taking offence at the teaching of Holy Scripture, and standing up against the Lord and against His Anointed. But 'He that sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.' Strathdearn, 26th Nov., 1880."

During the heated discussion anent the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland Mr Macfarlane faithfully adhered to the 1843 Disruption position and steadfastly opposed the Disestablishment crusade, though even at that time he saw breakers ahead, and in a letter to the *Inverness Courier*, dated 9th January, 1891, he says:—"In reply to the question, 'Where-

are the Chalmerses and the Cunninghams, etc.?' allow me to say that it is not at all improbable but a Disruption may ere long take place in the Free Church, and if so it shall then be seen how many of her ministers will deny themselves of their worldly all and launch themselves and their Church on the providence of God. Reference is made to the 'down grade' in the Free Church, and the probable cause of it is said to be 'want of faith in her ministers.' I should say that not only want of faith, but 'want of *faithfulness* on the part of the majority' of her ministers is certainly the cause of it. The down grade began in 1863. and Disestablishment is a great step in the downward course."

In the year 1889 Mr Macfarlane received a call to Kilmallie, which he accepted to the great regret of his attached and devoted people at Moy. The people there did all they could to get him to remain among them, and when at last he accepted the call Alexander Fraser said that he did not believe Mr Macfarlane's work at Moy was finished, which, in a way, proved true, for Mr Macfarlane assisted almost at every Communion at Moy since 1893 until failing strength rendered it impossible for him to do so. Even to the last he was looked upon by the people of Moy as their minister, and they had a place in his heart which continued warm to the end.

At Kilmallie Mr Macfarlane laboured assiduously for a few years preaching, visiting, and catechising, and assisting at Communions. He had in his congregation a number of eminent Christians who were a great help to him; among these may be named—Donald Macmaster, John Macdonald, Alexander Stewart, Duncan Macdougall, Angus MacNaughton, Allan Young, etc.

As his preaching qualities became better known other congregations desired to have him as their pastor, and in August, 1891, he was approached by the congregation of North Uist as to whether he would accept a call from them. On this he writes:—"Received a letter to-day from Mr D. MacDonald, North Uist, stating that the congregation there were thinking of giving me a call to become their pastor and asking me if I would encourage them to proceed with a call. I replied that I was not at present in a position to say that it was my duty to accept a call, but that I hoped and prayed that the Lord would give them, in answer to prayer, a pastor who would feed the flock with knowledge and understanding. I am very much attached to that part of the world and to the Lord's people there, and more especially to Mr MacDonald. I was born in that parish; it was there I was first moved to concern about the salvation of my soul through the preaching of the late Mr McColl. There are thus many ties which shall never be broken binding me to North Uist, but I am only three years in my present charge, and I feel that my work is not yet all done in it. Whether the Lord means to do good to the people here through me, unworthy me, I cannot say, but one thing I feel more encouraged to labour for the conversion of precious souls than I felt since I came to the parish, and this makes me unwilling to leave it in the meantime. I would like to labour more than I have done and to get more fruit than I have yet seen before leaving it. May the Lord help me."

Besides North Uist, other congregations approached him. Among these was the congregation of Daviot, but he gave them no encouragement to proceed with a

call, yet, notwithstanding his decision, they proceeded to elect him, as is evident from the following entry in his diary:—"Received a letter from Daviot intimating that, notwithstanding my letter to their Moderator of Session, I was unanimously elected at a congregational meeting held there on the 4th inst., and I saw in a newspaper the report of a meeting of the Free Presbytery of Inverness that a call is to be moderated in in my favour on the 21st. What is this? I thought my letter to Mr Mackenzie would have put a stop to proceeding in the matter, but no. What am I to do? In case it may be from the Lord I shall consider the matter seeing the people are determined to proceed with a call. I shall wait on the Lord for guidance from His Word and providence. Oh! send forth thy light and thy truth; let them be guides to me. While praying for guidance the following text came with light and gladness to my mind: 'And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known' (Isaiah xlii. 16). Lord, lead me in the way in which I should walk and make the path of duty clear to me. When praying again for light to make the path of duty plain the latter part of the same text came to my mind with so much comfort as enabled me to look to the Lord for further light: 'I will make darkness light before them and crooked things straight; these things will I do unto them and not forsake them.' In my case there is darkness and there are crooked things, but the Lord can do as He promised, and if the promise applies to me in connection with the call then the path of duty will be clear to me so far as I can judge. Let me, therefore, wait on Him, having my eye on the pillar of His Word and that of His providence.

According as He is willing to guide me I am willing through grace to act—whether to remain where I am or to remove to another sphere of labour—though I feel inclined to remove if I were to consult my own feelings. If that feeling be from the Lord I need the fulfilment of the promise before I can remove. When thinking of one difficulty I see in the way of leaving my present charge the following words of the great Apostle spoke to me: ‘I conferred not with flesh and blood.’ Though I believe the congregation as a whole would be opposed to my leaving them, there are some in particular I would feel it keenly if they did not acquiesce in the event of my being led to decide on leaving. But the Lord may make the crooked things straight.” After further consideration, Mr Macfarlane refused the call.

About this time Mr Macfarlane received intimation of the death of Mr Walter Campbell, missionary, North Uist, a son of Mr George Campbell, Gaelic teacher at Scourie, and brother of Mr William Campbell, for long a missionary at Wick, and he writes of him:—“He was a true man of God and a dear friend to me—a man that was mellowed with the love of Christ and that did good work in the vineyard in his day. He is now beholding the face of Christ, whom he so much loved and served on earth. His work on earth is finished and that in heaven begun. We miss him on earth, the redeemed in glory welcome him as one of those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Oh! happy are they who have got safely through the wilderness to the rest that remains for the people of God to enjoy Him and to serve Him in the state of perfection for ever and ever. His service on earth is sweet when He Himself is present

with His people. His service in heaven will be sweeter, for His gracious face always shines on them there—no cloud of sin, darkness, or unbelief intervenes there between Christ and His redeemed. Their sun shall no more go down and their moon shall no more be darkened. The Lord is their everlasting sun and the days of their mourning are ended. Oh! to be of the blessed number who have a right and title through free grace to enter the New Jerusalem above when death comes to remove them from time to eternity. Although we mourn the removal of God's people from the earth, yet there is something unspeakably pleasant associated with it—their being made perfect—their beholding the face of Christ—their company—their service—their everlasting felicity—all combine to fill the soul still in the state of imperfection with joyful thoughts that cannot be expressed. Oh! to be with Christ is far better.”

About this date there is a reference in his diary to his successor at Moy: “To-day Mr Mackenzie was ordained at Moy, my former charge. I am glad they have got a good minister there, and I wish him success. A godly minister is one of the gifts Christ received for His Church. Mr Mackenzie adheres firmly to the good old doctrines of the Word of God. There is great need of such ministers in this age when so many adopt the New Theology, which, as Spurgeon says, is no theology, but a departure from the Word of God.” Another entry in his diary at this date may be quoted here: “I had great liberty during the first sermon when speaking of the glorious rest Christ would give to the redeemed at His second advent. I felt as at the very gates of heaven tasting freely of the happiness which is enjoyed in full

in the state of glory. I got a feast—ever blessed be God! He knows that I needed it.”

In 1891 the Declaratory Act was brought before the General Assembly of the Free Church and sent down as an overture under the Barrier Act to the Presbyteries of the Church. It was seen in the spring of 1892 that the vast majority of the Presbyteries approved of the Act, and consequently that it would be passed by the Assembly under the terms of the Barrier Act into a “binding law and constitution” of the Free Church. In April of this year Mr Macfarlane called a meeting of elders, etc., of the districts from Oban to Kilmallie to consider what should be done in the event of the General Assembly passing the Act. The unanimous decision come to by the meeting was that they could not remain in a Church which would tolerate the doctrines taught in the Declaratory Act. At this meeting Mr Macfarlane spoke calmly but deliberately of the far-reaching effect of the changes contemplated and of the necessity of adhering to the Bible and the Confession of Faith. At the General Assembly in May, 1892, the Declaratory Act* was passed notwithstanding a strong protest from those opposed to it. The kirk-session of Kilmallie were unanimous in protesting against the Act, and notwithstanding the order of the Assembly to have such protests deleted from kirk-session and presbytery records, somehow the Kilmallie kirk-session protest was overlooked, and it was never deleted, for it was proved afterwards that the Assembly was in error in requiring their deletion. The kirk-

* This Act is given in Appendix I. Criticisms of its subtle teaching are given in the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol. I., pp. 41, 121, 161, 201, 241, 281, 361, 401; vol. XXXI., pp. 139, 161, 201, 241, 321, 374, 401, 408; and vol. XXXII., p. 41.

session protest is in the following words:—" At Kilmallie, and within the Free Church there, on the 25th day of Jan., 1893, the kirk-session met and was constituted. Sederunt: Rev. D. Macfarlane, moderator, and Messrs D. Macmaster, Alexander Stewart, Duncan McDougald, Ewen MacMillan, Angus MacMillan, and Edward Wilson, elders. The minutes of last meeting were read and approved. The session unanimously agreed to engross in the minutes the following statement and protest against action of the last Assembly in passing the Declaratory Act into a law of the Church: ' The General Assembly of 1892 by passing the Declaratory anent the Confession of Faith has, in our opinion, taken a decided step in the direction of imperilling the interests of divine truth, and of innovation upon the doctrinal and ecclesiastical constitution of the Free Church, inasmuch as—First, under the head of the divine sovereignty and divine love it has so stated the doctrine of the Church as to sanction or give room for holding the scheme of doctrine known by the name of Calvinistic Universalism, whereby the mediation of Christ is represented as to be held and taught, not as the effect of the divine purpose of grace to individuals who are thereby saved, but as the expression of the general love of God to mankind for their salvation, the sovereign purpose of God towards individuals being to be considered as subsidiary to this in order to make the mediation of Christ effectual in the case of any. Secondly, under the head of the fall and its effect, the corruption of man's nature by the fall and his consequent need of the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, have been so stated as to minimize and imperil the doctrine of man's natural state of death in sin and his

utter unrighteousness and ungodliness in the sight of a righteous and holy God. Thirdly, under the cover of the general ambiguous statement (that the office-bearers of the Church in subscribing the Confession are not considered as committed to any principle, inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment), framed in order to displace the fuller unambiguous statement on the same subject in the preamble to Act xii., 1846, anent the Question and Formula, the general doctrine of the Confession of Faith, respecting the exercise of civil authority about religion, is invalidated or set aside contrary to the design and intention of the Church in framing the foresaid preamble, and a door is opened for the admission to office in the Church of men who deny that the State has any duty towards true religion and the Church of Christ. Fourthly, instead of the Westminster Confession of Faith, as the recognised standard of orthodoxy, in the Church, in all its heads and articles, has been substituted what is called the substance of the Reformed Faith as therein set forth—the Church being the sole judge of the particular points that are to be included under this category of doctrine, a provision which overthrows the fixed doctrinal constitution of the Church, and lays its creed at the feet of an irresponsible majority to determine the same at will. And we protest that the said Act shall not be binding on us or on those who may now or hereafter adhere to us, but that, notwithstanding the passing of the same Act, we, and those who may now, or hereafter, adhere to us, shall not be thereby prejudiced in maintaining the doctrines and principles of the Free Church as set forth in her authorized standards and authoritative documents, as hitherto recognised and

understood, and in taking all steps that may be necessary to vindicate the said doctrine and principles and our own and the Church's rights, sacred and civil, in connection therewith.' Closed with prayer. D. MACFARLANE, Moderator." The question now arose as what was to be done, and it was decided by the opponents of the Act that an appeal be made to next Assembly to have it repealed. In November of 1892 Mr Macfarlane made it known that if this request was rejected he would cease to be a minister in the Church which had adopted the Act. In the spring of 1893 Mr Macfarlane received a call from the congregation of Raasay, which he accepted. In taking office Mr Macfarlane did so under protest against the Declaratory Act, and stated that he signed the formula without any reference to it.

As a good deal of capital has been made by some of the Constitutionlists who remained in the Free Church after 1893 of Mr Macfarlane not leaving the Church in 1892, reference may be made to the subject here; in a letter to the *Northern Chronicle* referring to a statement made by the Rev. Prof. Kennedy Cameron in his *Scottish Union of 1900*, he writes: "In last week's issue of the *Chronicle* I read your review of the book written by the Rev. John Kennedy Cameron. In his remarks about the Free Presbyterian Church, and especially about me, he made some statements that were not correct. He said that I was under the Declaratory Act for a year, and was inducted at Raasay under it. Now, the truth is that I was not under that Act for one day. I was at Kilmallie in the year 1892, when the Act was passed into a binding law. As soon as we heard that, our session 'protested' against the action of the Assembly in doing that, and

the protest was written in the session record. Next year, 1893, I was translated to Raasay before the meeting of Assembly. On the day of my induction I stated publicly before the presbytery and the congregation that I was not taking office as minister of Raasay under the Declaratory Act in any sense or to any degree. After I left Kilmallie the Rev. John McAskill, Onich, was appointed moderator of the congregation. In 1894 an order came from headquarters to remove the protest from the session book. Mr McAskill refused to do so, and appealed to the Synod. From the Synod the case came to the Assembly. When the case was considered by that court, Sheriff Jamieson, who was a member of Assembly, said that he had to say that 'on legal grounds' they could not compel the congregation to remove the protest from the session record. I remained a year without taking up a separate position. The reason was that the Constitutionalists asked me not to separate till they would make an effort to make the Assembly repeal the Act. They were to do this at the meeting of Assembly in 1893. I was a member of the Assembly that year. The Assembly refused to repeal the Act. When I saw that, I tabled my protest, and took up a separate position in defence of the truth. It is very mean of Mr Kennedy Cameron to cast up to me now that I remained a year with them, seeing it was to help them I did so. Rev. John Kennedy Cameron's attack on our Church reminds me of the Samaritans who offered to co-operate with the Jews in building the temple after their return from captivity. When the Jews refused the offer, the Samaritans did everything they could to weaken the hands of the Jews in their good work.—I am, etc., D. MACFARLANE."

CHAPTER III.

Consultations with Dr Balfour and the Constitutionalist Leaders.—Protest Tabled.—Mr Macfarlane's Explanation why the Separation did not take place in 1892.—Millhouse (Kames) Congregation first to separate.—Raasay Congregation takes its stand.—Meeting at Inverness.—Meeting of First Presbytery (28th July, 1893).—Deed of Separation Approved.—Action of Skye Free Presbytery.—Mr Macaskill's changed attitude.—Mr George Alexander's Letter.—Mrs Auld's Letter to *Northern Chronicle*.—Extracts from Diary.

SOME considerable time before the meeting of the Assembly of 1893 Mr Macfarlane communicated with Dr Balfour, Edinburgh, who had taken a prominent position in opposing the Declaratory Act, to ascertain whether Dr Balfour intended to protest and leave the Church in the event of the Declaratory Act being still adhered to. Dr Balfour's reply indicated that he was not prepared to go this length. When Mr Macfarlane consulted with his Constitutionalist* brethren he met with no more success, for on showing his protest to them, though some of them approved of it, they would not go the length of signing it. He thus was left alone, and his feelings are indicated by the following entry in his diary:—"All men forsook me . . . notwithstanding the Lord stood by me and strengthened me."

When the Assembly met, those who had been making rousing speeches and threatening drastic action if the

* The name given to the party in the Free Church who adhered to the Constitution and opposed the policy of Dr Rainy.

Declaratory Act became the law of the Free Church, remained silent, and it was left to Mr Macfarlane, a man of a quiet, retiring, and timid disposition, who had not been heard boasting on the housetops what great things he intended to do, to step forward and, in the face of a hostile Assembly, table his protest.

Dr Rainy, after the protest had been read, rose and moved that a Committee be appointed to confer with Mr Macfarlane. The step taken by Mr Macfarlane created considerable commotion among the Constitutionalists. They convened a meeting in Edinburgh at the close of the Assembly. Among those present were the Revs. Dr Balfour, Edinburgh; Murdo Mackenzie, Inverness; and Murdo Macaskill, Dingwall. Mr Mackenzie asked Mr Macfarlane, who was present, what he meant to do. Mr Macfarlane replied that it was his intention to have a Presbytery formed, and that they would then proceed to license students who adhered to them and whose theological studies had been finished. Mr Mackenzie, on hearing this, said, "You will compromise us." Mr Macfarlane, however, was quite determined to do his duty whatever effect it would have on the hesitating policy of the Constitutionalists.

In his *Memoir of Rev. D. Macdonald*, Mr Macfarlane makes the following reference to the separation which followed his protest:—"If it be asked, Why did it not take place in 1892 when the change was made? the answer is, Some did speak of separating at that time, but there was a cry among the Constitutionalists to keep together, to act in concert, and to wait till they should exhaust all constitutional means in their power to persuade the Assembly to reconsider their action with a view to the rescinding of the Declaratory Act. At the

Assembly of 1893 there was an effort made by the Constitutionalists to this effect ; but the Assembly refused to rescind the Act or even to appoint a Committee to consider whether anything should be done with a view to its being rescinded, which was all that the motion of the Constitutionalists craved. The Assembly made it distinctly clear that they would never rescind the Act. There was, therefore, no alternative left for us but to separate. We waited with the Constitutionalists as long as we could, and perhaps longer than we should. We cannot be justly charged with having been too hasty in the step we took, though the charge has often been made " (pp. 34, 35).

On his way back from the Assembly he was invited to preach to the congregation at Millhouse, Kames. On Monday a meeting of the congregation was held, which was addressed by Mr Macfarlane and others. After the situation had been explained, the congregation decided to separate from the Church which had adopted the Declaratory Act, and thus became the first congregation in what was to be known afterwards as the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Mr Macfarlane was greatly encouraged by the decision of the congregation. On his return home, he, on the Monday of Raasay Communion (second Sabbath of June), gave a very able lecture explanatory of the situation in which they were now placed, to a large congregation gathered from different parts of the West of Scotland. At the end he asked all those who desired to adhere to the Bible in its entirety as the Word of God, and to the Confession of Faith in all its doctrines as hitherto held by the Free Church, to stand up. All present, with the exception of about half a dozen, stood up. He asked then that the strangers

present should sit down so that he might see how his own congregation stood. It was then seen that the few objectors, except one, were of the Raasay congregation.

It was then arranged that a meeting should take place at Inverness on Tuesday evening. There was a large gathering, and the Rev. D. Macdonald, who was present, took his stand with Mr Macfarlane. It was then decided that they should take immediate steps to form a Presbytery, to be called the Free Church Presbytery of 1843. Accordingly, on 27th July, 1893, the Revs. D. Macfarlane and D. Macdonald, with Mr Alexander Macfarlane, schoolmaster, Raasay, met and “resolved to meet next day, and, in the name of the Head of the Church, form themselves into a separate Presbytery, not owning the jurisdiction of the courts of the presently subsisting Church, calling herself the Free Church of Scotland.” In terms of this resolution the first Presbytery met at Raasay on the 28th July, 1893. Messrs Macfarlane, Macdonald, and A. Macfarlane, ruling elder, were the members present. “It was agreed that the Presbytery should be known and called by the name of ‘The Free Church Presbytery of Scotland.’ It was also agreed that a Statement, setting forth the reasons for taking this solemn step should be prepared, to be submitted to a future meeting of Presbytery, with a view to the same being engrossed in the minutes of the Court.” At a meeting of the Presbytery held at Portree, 14th August, 1893, the Deed of Separation* was read and approved by the Presbytery and engrossed in the minutes.

The Skye Free Church Presbytery, on learning the decision of Mr Macfarlane and his congregation, took

* This document is given in Appendix II.

steps to deal with the situation. The Clerk of Presbytery, the Rev. D. A. Macdonald, Kilmuir, addressed a letter to Mr Macfarlane, asking him to deliver up the keys of the church and manse because he had left the Free Church. Mr Macfarlane replied that he had not left the Free Church, but it was those who remained under the Declaratory Act who had done so. Perhaps, if the majority in the Free Church realised the disaster that was to overtake them in 1904 they would have made some arrangement whereby Mr Macfarlane and his congregation would have been left in possession of the church and manse. But not knowing what was awaiting themselves in a few years, they saw to it that Mr Macfarlane and his congregation would require to find a manse and church for themselves as best they could. Mr Macfarlane removed to Broadford, where he rented a house. From there he crossed the sea to Raasay every week-end until a manse was built.

In an extract from his diary, quoted at the end of this chapter, Mr Macfarlane makes reference to some difficulties he had to encounter at this time. At first the proprietrix, Mrs Wood, refused to grant sites for church or manse, but ultimately consented. About this time he received a letter from a friend, in which was quoted the words of the Psalmist: "All the horns of the wicked shall be cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted" (Ps. lxxv. 3), and he states that this was an encouragement to him in his conflicts, for which he praised the Lord. "It appears to me," he said, "that one reason why Satan attacks me so much and so often is that I took the lead in raising a testimony in defence of God's truth at a time when the faith once delivered to the saints was in danger of being overthrown in Scot-

land. It was a poor sign of the religious state of God's cause in the land when it was left to me, who am less than the least of His witnesses; but the Lord's cause was dear to me, and I could not see it fall to the ground without putting my weak shoulder to it to hold it up as an unworthy instrument in His mighty hand. Others have suffered obloquy for the same cause, and the Evil One pursued them with vengeance all their days. Seeing that this is the chief cause of my sufferings, so far as creatures here have a hand in it, though the Lord has many reasons to chastise me, I seek to bear them gladly because I suffer for a good cause—the best cause. I see reasons daily to be filled with shame and confusion of face before the Lord for my sins and shortcomings, but I ought to rejoice that I am counted worthy to suffer for His Name's sake. So far as the Lord is concerned in my sufferings, I suffer justly—it is of His mercies that I am not consumed; but so far as creatures are concerned, in this I suffer unjustly. But enough of this. Let me seek preparation for serving the Lord on a coming holy Sabbath, if it is His will to spare me."

To many the separation was like deliverance from Egyptian bondage. There was a unity, zeal and warmth among those who left the Declaratory Act Church which makes that time one of the green spots in their memories. The effort to check the movement was not confined to the out-and-out advocates of the new order of things, for among some of the most bitter opponents to the Free Presbyterian movement were former friends. This has invariably been so. There are no opponents so envenomed and fierce in their attacks as those who were at one time active and strong supporters. Whether their loud denunciations are a last resort to stifle the voice of a

conscience ill at ease, or whether it is a cleverly executed plan to divert the attention of their opponents from the line of their retreat, it may be difficult to say, but the fact remains that quondam friends can be very fierce enemies. This is one of the ironies of religious and ecclesiastical life. One of the chief critics of the new movement was the Rev. Murdo Macaskill, Dingwall. He characterised the Free Presbyterian movement "as the most mischievous movement of modern times, and calculated only to do most serious harm to the cause of truth and godliness in our beloved Highlands." After all his rousing and fiery speeches and ignoble retreat in the day of battle, silence, even only as a negative virtue, would have become him. Controversy brings out a man's strength or reveals his weakness. Men who were never suspected of holding certain opinions contrary to the truth reveal their views in the stress of controversy, and one is amazed at times to find that those who were regarded true as steel are only made of clay, and very poor clay at that. But the opposition to the Free Presbyterian movement from former friends and open enemies did nothing to retard it. The chief difficulty was to find preachers for the number of congregations asking for them. There can be little doubt that the Church would have been larger to-day if it had been able to supply congregations with preachers at the beginning. An ominous silence fell on the Constitutional leaders in witnessing against error in the Church—they were like men whose lips had been securely sealed by their own actions. All sorts of attempts were made to find an excuse for remaining in the Church under the Declaratory Act. Mr Macaskill suddenly discovered, after his fiery speeches against it, that it was only a "relieving Act."

In a letter written at this time, Mr George Alexander,* Birkenhead, deals with some of the lame attempts made to cover an ignominious retreat. “The admirers of Dr Rainy,” he says, “show their aptitude to follow him as he follows the grand old sophist when they say of the Declaratory Act—‘it is not an imposing but a relieving Act.’ But I ask how can they stand by that Scripture, ‘Hold fast the form of sound words,’ etc., when they suffer their hands to be tied by this Act? With it, how can they now lay hands on an unsound professor or minister and admonish or reject him for denying, say, the necessity of the new birth? With it, how can they rebuke such sharply that they may be sound in the faith? Why, it cannot be done; for truly enough such are relieved by it of all liability to either admonition or rejection, or the otherwise just charge of being ‘perjured persons.’ Whereas before the passing of this Act these haters of the fundamental doctrines of the everlasting Gospel were by their first signing a form of sound words, and then afterwards writing and preaching contrary, undoubtedly ‘perjured persons.’ It is very evident to an observant onlooker that the Free Church has of late years developed an amazing number of admirers of Mr Gladstone, and these so blind that they swallowed (as is evidenced by their cheers) the last hook he cast them for votes, baited, as it was, with the very word he hates, ‘the Reformation’—the thing he is spending his last effort to overthrow. Yes, sir, so blind were these they saw not his craft, neither his duplicity, nor his utter contempt for consistency. But the Free Church has no

* Mr Alexander, though resident in England, was a Scotsman. Though a Congregationalist minister, he took a deep interest in the Free Presbyterian Church and all movements in Scotland that were of a Scriptural kind.

less developed an amazing number of men who by their writings show that they have turned to fables and cannot endure sound doctrine. Now the late Sir William Mac-
kinnon did a wise thing when he altered his will so that these oppressors of sound doctrine should not touch a penny of his money. I doubt not but the same Providence who directed him to withhold will also direct some others to bestow a moiety for the necessities of the Micaiahs who hate and abhor alike the rotten Gladstonian politics no less than the unsound doctrines of the present Confederacy. In the steps these honest and Scripturally consistent men have taken—Mr Macfarlane of Raasay and his brethren—they are in my view seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and in so doing they shall find all other things added to them. The eminent Dr Gill, when cautioned by some not to hazard too much in contending for the truth, replied: ‘I am not afraid to be poor,’ and Solomon of old has said: ‘A poor man is better than a liar.’ ”

It has often been asserted that if Dr Kennedy lived he would not have separated, as had been done by the Free Presbyterians, but that he would have remained in the Church; but the following, which appeared in the *Northern Chronicle*, from the pen of a very intimate friend of Dr Kennedy’s, shows the fallacy of this view:—“Free Church Manse, Olrig, 10th November, 1894. Sir,—A letter appears in your issue of this week in which the question is asked—Could anyone who knew and esteemed Dr Kennedy ever think of him for one moment as embracing the views and agreeing with the action of the Rev. D. Macfarlane and Rev. D. Macdonald? To do so would be to cast a slur on his memory as a man and as a minister, as a theologian and an

ecclesiastic. In reply, please permit me to state a conversation held with Dr Kennedy two years before his death, which it was deemed inadvisable to publish in his *Life*, the Free Church being then unbroken; but his position being now questioned in your columns, it would seem not right to withhold it.

‘ It was in the summer of 1882, shortly after the permission by the Assembly of the use of instrumental music in public worship, that a friend said to Dr Kennedy—‘ Was not that an un-Presbyterian decision of last Assembly, allowing each congregation to bring in or not as they pleased instrumental music? Is there not something in our Standards about uniformity of worship?’ ‘ Yes,’ he replied, ‘ there is; but what does our advanced party care about the Standards—to them the Confession itself is a burden too grievous to be borne.’ ‘ But they cannot get out from under it and remain in the Free Church?’ ‘ No, they cannot, nor can they alter it, but they can frame an Act modifying its doctrines, as has been done by the U.P. Church, a suicidal Act in my opinion.’ ‘ But will the Constitutional party submit to that?’ ‘ I should hope not, and yet the other party is revolutionising the Church bit by bit. Do you know I am contemplating a Caledonian Church?’ ‘ A Caledonian Church! What do you mean?’ ‘ I mean this, that I believe the Lord has a remnant in our land who will not brook a creed framed to suit and to shelter men of Arminian and Rationalistic opinions, a remnant that will separate, and as I think the separating party will be found especially in the districts lying north and west of the Caledonian Canal. I am naming it prospectively the Caledonian Church.’ ‘ Dr., what an idea! You know that, even if a Church was formed in these

parts, it could not support itself.' 'No, not adequately, but our Caledonian Church will not, like our Disestablishment friends, throw overboard the Claim of Right and Protest, and a fitting opportunity may yet arise for their pressing the Claim on behalf of the people of the Highlands, and securing for them a share in the endowments pledged to Scotland for the maintenance of religious ordinances practised in accordance with the Confession of Faith and Presbyterian Standards.' 'Well, Doctor, if these are your views, I hope they will not be realised in a hurry, for I believe the difficulties and responsibilities connected with the organizing of your Caledonian Church would end your days.' 'Perhaps so, and perhaps I shall have joined the Church of the First Born before the crisis comes; but that it will come, within a very few years, appears to me inevitable.' —I am, etc.,—C. R. AULD."*

As the Free Presbyterian movement extended, the call for Mr Macfarlane's services increased to such an extent that he was seldom at home. His congregation, however, did not complain—they renounced their own claims and rights for the general good of the cause. Mr Macfarlane has an entry in his diary referring to those times that may be appropriately quoted here:—"We lived," he writes, "in Broadford for five years. I went to Raasay on Saturday for the Sabbath work, and returned to Broadford on Monday, which caused great inconvenience, expense, and trouble. But my health was good, and I was happy. Mr Alexander Macfarlane, the teacher, kindly gave me lodgings from Saturday till Monday when I came to preach to my people, and both

* Mrs Auld died in July, 1928, at the great age of 95. Her husband, the Rev. Alexander Auld, was the author of *Ministers and Men in the Far North*, and *Life of Dr Kennedy*.

he and Mrs Macfarlane were kind to me during the five years I was without a manse. We were applying to Mrs Wood all the time for sites to build a church and manse, but for five years she blankly refused unless we took sites in the north end of the island, where we did not need a church. At last a petition, signed by all the people, was sent to her, and then she granted sites at Holman, but on certain conditions, which would seem to make it impossible for the poor people to comply with. One of these conditions was that they would give up claiming any right to the meeting-house at Torran, on the north end, which they themselves built, with some help from the late Mr Wood, who, it was said, handed over the building to them as their own property. Another condition was that they would require to have all the money necessary to meet the cost of building before they would be allowed to start, and that the church would require to be built first [before the manse]. This seemed to some to put an end to their hope of ever having church or manse though they got sites. Indeed, some who were not favourable to us said: 'There is no harm in giving them sites on these terms; they shall never be able to build.' But they did not know the mind of Him who says, 'My thoughts are not your thoughts.' We got all the money required, and both edifices were completed towards the end of August, 1899. We came to live in the manse in November following, and found ourselves supplied with houses better than those out of which we were evicted. We praised the Lord for His goodness to us, and saw that none ever loses, even in temporal things, by following the path of duty. Not only the Lord made up the loss of houses, but the salary of the ministers was as good as when they were in the Church they left."

As most of God's people have times of depression as well as prosperity in this world, and it is well that it is so, for it helps to keep them closer to Himself, so it was with Mr Macfarlane, as we find from the following entry in his diary :—

“ How much we need the quickening and reviving work of the Spirit in Raasay ! My own soul needs it, and the congregation needs it. ‘ Wilt Thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee ? ’ Thine arm is not shortened, and Thine ear is not become heavy. Oh ! stir up Thy strength and might, and come for our salvation ! We are like the bones in the valley, dry, disjointed, and scattered. We are weak and helpless to raise ourselves to life, but Thou art our Creator, and though we destroyed ourselves, Thou canst create us again anew in Christ. Thou art glorified in doing this work. Oh ! may it please Thee to do it. Tarry not. Come and breathe on us by Thy blessed Spirit, that we may live to praise and glorify Thee. My waiting eyes are towards Thee. We are sinful and unworthy, but I plead the merits of Christ, who glorified Thee. I plead the promises of Thy Word, and Thou hast said : ‘ I will be enquired of by the house of Israel,’ for these things which Thou hast promised. Thou hast given many great and precious promises that poor sinners might come to the throne of grace to plead their fulfilment. I come to Thee with these promises that Thou mayest make them good to us. The cause is Thine own ; the enemy seeks to destroy it and to triumph over it. Oh ! discomfit him. Bruise his head under the feet of Thy poor people ! Take the prey from him, and raise up many in these islands to serve Thee. Amen.”

CHAPTER IV.

Call to Dingwall.—Western Presbytery's and Synod's Decisions.—Farewell Sermon at Raasay.—Letter to Dr Whyte.—Protest against Modern Customs.—Letter from Mr Duncan Fraser, Carr-Bridge.—Comments on Union of 1900.—House of Lords' Decision in the Church Case (1904).—Mr Macfarlane's Comments on the same.—Effect of Decision on some Free Presbyterians.—Agitation for Union with the Free Church (1905).—Letter by Mr Macfarlane.

IN the year 1903 Mr Macfarlane received a call from the congregation of Dingwall. He intimated his willingness to accept the call if placed in his hands, and gave, as his authority for so doing, the words, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" (Rev. iii. 8). The Presbytery, in the exercise of their rights, refused to put the call into his hands. The Northern Presbytery, which were prosecuting the call, appealed to the Synod. When the appeal came before a *pro re nata* meeting of the Synod, it was unanimously decided that the call be put into Mr Macfarlane's hands by the Western Presbytery.

When leaving Raasay he preached from the text: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts xx. 32). And in concluding the service he said:—"In parting with you as a congregation who have been committed to me, and to whom I have endeavoured to preach for the last ten years, I now commend you to God and to the word of His grace. Ministers are removed, but God never changes. Cleave

to Him and to His word of grace. God and His Word are unchangeable. You professed when we took up a separate position as a Church to be followers of the truth and not of men, except in so far as they followed the truth. Hold fast your profession. Some may say when a minister leaves a congregation the people, or some of them, will leave the Church and join another Church. But those who say so forget that ministers are not the Church. I do not think that any of you will leave the Church; but if any do so, they will prove that they are followers of men and not of the word of God's grace. I may mention that the church and manse are the property of the congregation as long as they adhere to the principles and constitution of our Church. It will not go by majority. In the case of a division, even one member or adherent of the congregation can claim the property. That is secured in the title deeds. I am conscious of my shortcomings in my endeavours to preach the Gospel to you, and I often mourned that I saw so little fruit in the way of conversion to God among you. But I hope the Lord's people were edified in some measure, and that the seed sown for the last ten years may yet be blessed, to some at least, in bringing them to Christ. I desired, and laboured for, the salvation of you all."

Dingwall was without a settled pastor for ten years, but, through many ups and downs, remained faithful to the cause. Mr Macfarlane was inducted there on 8th May, 1903, and ministered to the congregation until his death in 1926. Though a small congregation, they were not unwilling to face heavy financial responsibilities. Soon after Mr Macfarlane's induction a church (which was later on enlarged), and afterwards a manse, was built. Mr Macfarlane, during the early part of his

Dingwall pastorate, continued meeting the many calls made on his services, until declining health restricted the sphere of his labours to congregations within a short radius from Dingwall. It was during his Dingwall pastorate he published the *Memoir and Remains* of his dear friend, Mr Macdonald, Shieldaig. He also wrote a number of pamphlets,* and continued witnessing against the errors of the day both in Church and State. One of his sermons, in which he denounced Dr Whyte's indiscriminate quotations from writers of the Greek and Roman Catholic Churches, was reported in the *North Star* (Dingwall)—a copy of which was sent to Dr Whyte. Dr Whyte sent Mr Macfarlane his book on Thomas Shepard, and, in acknowledging it, Mr Macfarlane sent Dr Whyte the following letter:—"I beg to acknowledge receipt of your book on Thomas Shepard, which you have kindly sent me some time ago, for which I thank you. There are some good things in the volume, but there are other things which are of a different character. Indeed, there is in it a strange mixture of heterogeneous elements. If I did not know who was the author of the book, I would conclude from the artful way in which Popish elements are introduced into some of the lectures that it was written by a Jesuit. For instance, you associate Cardinal Newman, Dr Pusey, and Santa Teresa—a Spanish nun—with the Apostle Paul, Luther, Shepard, Rutherford, and other true Christians, as authorities on Christian doctrine and experience. Now, any man who knows the history of Newman and Pusey must know that they were notorious hypocrites. In proof of this I cite themselves as witnesses. Newman confessed that he held office in the Protestant Church for twelve years as a

* A list of these will be found in Appendix III.

concealed priest ; and Pusey, speaking of his Romanising work in the Church of England, said : ‘ We put the leaven into the meal and waited to see what would come of it.’ You, knowing all this, speak of these treacherous men as authorities on Christian doctrine and experience ! Again, on page 63 of your book, where you speak of the picture of Jesus Christ, you teach Popish idolatry. The Second Commandment forbids the worshipping of God by images. And yet you advise your congregation to do what God forbids ! Where was the intelligence of your hearers when there was none to stand up in the church to protest against your idolatrous teaching ? As an introduction to this element of Popery, you spoke of the godly Durham causing a study to be made at the head of the stair, where he gave himself to spiritual reading and prayer. You know that he had no picture of Jesus Christ in his study to remind him of his duty to pray. He was not an idolater like your friend, whom you associate with him in order, it would appear, to make your Popish teaching more acceptable to your congregation. Was not this the reason ? Let conscience answer. In addition to many objectionable things in your book—a few of which I have pointed out—allow me to say that I cannot reconcile your profession of Protestantism with your advocacy of union with the Church of Rome, which you boldly do in your sermon on the Re-Union of Christendom. In seeking union with the apostate Church of Rome, you so far serve that Church while in the pay of a Protestant Church. Your conduct in this respect is strangely inconsistent with your profession of Protestantism, as well as with your high position now as Principal of a Protestant College,* where your influence

* New College, Edinburgh.

over the students will be great, either for good or evil. As you are so fond of joining the Church of Rome, the honest course for you to take would be to walk over at once to that Church, and not wait till you bring others along with you. If you do so, the cause of Christ will not, in my opinion, suffer any loss. All the loss shall be your own. May God in mercy bring you, by the teaching of His Spirit, to see the error of your ways ere it be too late. I shall be glad to hear from you what you have to say in reply to my letter." Dr Whyte never replied.

As might be expected in a town charge, he saw and heard much to trouble and vex him from day to day, but he unflinchingly endeavoured to condemn everything contrary to and in opposition with the revelation given of the divine will and law, as shown in the following extract from his diary:—"In this degenerate age, the 20th century," he writes "people will not contribute anything to charitable objects without some vain demonstration to please the carnal minds such as concerts with profane songs, and sometimes dances and other doings. It is a bad sign when people will not give a farthing to help their fellows except through the hands of Satan. This is not the way of showing charity to the poor, as pointed out in Scripture. When the Apostle Paul proposed a collection for the poor in the churches, the money was willingly given by the members of the church without a concert or any other vain amusement such as is practiced by carnal people in our day. And the contributors enjoyed more happiness in the discharge of their duty than can be enjoyed by those who seek their happiness in the broken cisterns of concerts and other carnal amusements. But this is an Epicurean age, in which pleasure and luxury are considered the *magnum*

bonum and the chief end of man. When Self is the god, all must be done to please it. Not a penny must be given to relieve the starving poor except a sacrifice is first offered up to this jealous god. It has many worshippers in our day, and hence the many concerts, dances, and a great variety of other amusements prevalent throughout the land. The end of these things is death eternal. When the Spirit is poured from on high, the false god shall be dethroned and the true God will be worshipped."

Mr Macfarlane, like every true minister of Christ, was not without his troubles in Dingwall, as the following entries in his diary indicate:—"Some that left the congregation are very bitter against us, especially against me," he writes. "I must have my troubles, but the words in Ps. lxii. 12 comfort me. I am, therefore, encouraged to go forward in the strength of the Lord. He will give me the victory at last, notwithstanding the wiles of Satan. I gave no just cause to these men to be against me, and I have no ill-feeling towards them; and I commit myself to God to defend me from their rage, or rather from the rage of Satan, who breathes his vengeance through them. He can do nothing but as the Lord permits him. O! Lord, rebuke Satan, and bring these men to repentance. Meantime I seek to humble myself under the mighty hand of God, that in due time He may exalt me. They that will follow Christ shall have to bear their cross." In the same connection he writes:—"Received a letter from Duncan Fraser, Carr-Bridge, expressing sorrow at the removal by death of Mr William Fraser, elder, from the small congregation at Dingwall, and encouraging me to look to the Lord for support in all my trials." His

letter is worth preserving, and runs as follows:—
“Ellan: April 5th, 1907. Rev. and dear friend.—
Many a time I was of the mind to write you, but was always failing, which is like *me*. But when I heard of dear William Fraser’s death, which you will feel after all you have gone through of late, I delayed no longer in writing to you. There are many discouragements in the way, but it will be all to the glory of Him who can make all things work for good to them that love Him. Oh! I cannot love Him. But if I could love Him when I liked myself, what worth would be in it? In the midst of all discouragements I hope you are kept up to the great and precious Promiser above as you had been for some time. Dear friend, Jeremiah himself had need of comfort when everything was so discouraging. What was the use of buying a ‘field’ when everything was turned upside down? I am sometimes so far down that I do not know how to pray for this generation, which seems to go mad. Again I will be taking courage from the ‘beloved’ Daniel, who was praying before the time, yet was heard so soon. But I feel the want of the spirit of prayer. I would like to have a line from you, though unworthy.—Your unworthy friend, D. Fraser.”

Letters such as this encouraged him, and he makes reference to them in his diary:—“I take it as a token that the Lord is mindful of me that two of His praying people have in these days of trouble sent me a message of sympathy and comfort, especially as I did not inform them of what I have gone through in my soul since I saw them. It seems that they found out my case at the throne of grace. ‘The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.’”

Mr Macfarlane did not hesitate to protest against movements, however popular, which he regarded as not making for the best interests of the people. While highly appreciative of the aim of the Comunn Gaidhealach to keep Gaelic alive, he strongly opposed their methods, as the following shows:—"The people of Dingwall were to-day busy, and in high glee at their own Vanity Fair—The Mòd. The Mòd has for its object the teaching of Gaelic and to keep up that language among the Highlanders. This is a commendable object, but there are many objectionable things in connection with it, such as vain songs and dancing, which must have a deteriorating effect upon the moral and religious character of those connected with it. Ladies and gentlemen of high position in the world are at the head of this invention, and, though they do not intend it, Satan is using them as instruments to keep the rising generation in his net. When the Gospel prevails to bring sinners to Christ, these vain and sinful practices vanish away; but alas! in this age the most of men and women are bent on going to everlasting perdition. They have no ear to listen to the voice of Christ in the Gospel, but are ready to listen to the voice of Satan. But we who seek the salvation of precious souls ought to warn them against the devices of the great enemy of God and men, and we mean by God's grace to do it."

While strictly refusing to attend anything that savoured of levity, he willingly countenanced anything that tended to promote the temporal and spiritual well-being of the citizens and of the country at large, and specially helped to maintain and promote Protestant principles. Of one of the meetings held towards that

end he writes:—" Attended a meeting to-night in the Masonic Hall to hear a lecture by Mr Graham, Edinburgh, on ' Rome's Opposition to Protestant Missions.' That there were comparatively so few of the grown-up people present at the meeting shows how little interest the people of Dingwall take in the cause of Christ. When there are meetings for worldly amusements held, very often the people turn out in crowds, but they have no heart for what pertains to the cause of Christ, and the salvation of their own immortal souls. How Dingwall has changed since the time of Dr Kennedy! I was struck with a remark Mr Graham made in course of his lecture, viz., that the emissaries of the Romish Church always work in places where Protestants preach the Gospel, and not in heathen places where the people never heard the message of salvation. When I heard this, it occurred to me at once that this was consistent with the name of ' Anti-Christ.' It is where Christ works Anti-Christ opposes Him. Anti-Christ is, according to his name, against Christ, and opposes Him wherever He works by the Gospel. But Christ will overcome and destroy Anti-Christ."

He was a keen observer of all the movements within the Churches, and took special notice of the Union of 1900. Writing at that time, he says:—" 30th October, 1900. To-day the Union between the so-called Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church will be consummated. Soon it shall be heard and seen how many of the Constitutional ministers have not been decoyed by the love of the world into the Union. 31st October.—Read in the *Northern Chronicle* to-day a short report of the proceedings of last Assembly anent Union. Only 27 voted against it, while over 600 voted

for it. Rev. Murdo Mackenzie, Inverness, who sent a declaration to the Assembly craving the venerable Court to make it possible for him to enter the United Church, is put in a corner. Dr Rainy pointed out to him, what he ought to have known, and must have known, that the Union was to take place on the basis of the Uniting Act, which went through the Barrier Act, and that a declaration of that kind could not be embodied in the Constitution of the Church. It remains to be seen what Mr Mackenzie will do in the circumstances, as he is ambitious of popularity, and thinks that he will not be popular enough in a small Church. I should not wonder at all though he should enter the United Church on Dr Rainy's terms. He stated publicly at a meeting of his congregation last week that he would not join either the Established Church or the Free Presbyterian Church (the Secession Church, as he called it), and that the only alternative left him was to enter the United Church. A large majority of his congregation signified their approval of following their minister in this *downgrade* step. I see the names of Revs. Ewen Macleod, Oban, and William Mackinnon, Gairloch, among the ministers that did not enter the United Church. If they had made a stand in 1893 it would have been some evidence of their faithfulness to the truth and cause of Christ. But the property kept them under the Declaratory Act for the last seven years. Unless the ministers that did not join the Union purge out all the corruptions that were introduced into the Free Church since the Disruption of 1843, their creed is as unscriptural and unsound as that of the Union Church. That purgation can be accomplished only by an Act of Assembly—under the **Barrier Act**—rescinding the Declaratory Act and other

Acts legalising these corruptions. The doctrine of Establishment, or the relation between Church and State, should be more clearly stated than it is in the question put to office-bearers in the Free Church. At the Disruption there was more prominence given to the spiritual independence of the Church than to the relation that ought to subsist between the Church and the State. It was not disputed then that it was Scriptural that there should be such a relation. In fact, the Church was established. November 5th.—I saw in a paper to-day that Rev. Mr Mackenzie, Inverness, is among the ministers that did not enter the United Church! He failed to get into that body, and, therefore, he must of necessity remain with the minority. This must be humiliating to him, seeing that he decided to enter the large Church. It would appear from reports that the great bulk of the people of the Highlands will keep aloof from the United Church. Whatever the minority may do as a separate Church, I am glad that so many of the people are kept from going into the Church which is founded on such a sandy foundation as the Declaratory Acts of the two Churches which have now become one body. May the Lord preserve a remnant for Himself in the midst of the general declension! I am informed that a number of the people are coming to hear our ministers. I would wish this, not for the sake of having a large following, but for their own sake, that they may hear that which is founded on the Word of God, and be attached to what I believe to be the Original Free Church."

In August, 1904, the famous decision of the House of Lords was announced, and he makes the following

comment in his diary:—"Monday, 1st August, 1904. A wire came to-day stating that the Court of Session decision in the Free Church property case was reversed by the House of Lords. The newspapers to-morrow will reveal whether this is correct. If correct, the news will be hailed with approbation by all who adhere faithfully to the Confession of Faith. It will put a check on innovations in Scotland and England. It was not, however, principle but property that was uppermost in the minds of those that gained the case. The judgment of the Lords in the case may cause a confusion in the minds of some of our people in the Free Presbyterian Church—I mean in the minds of people who are ignorant of the real cause of our separation in 1893. But those who came out for principle then will remain steadfast with us, and those who may leave us, if any, shall be no loss to the cause of Christ in our Church. The sifting is still going on, and it shall be no loss to have the chaff blown away. It is likely that some in our Church will move for union with those that gained the property, but, for my part, I do not think that union with these would be beneficial to the cause of Christ in the land. Even though they (the so-called Free Church) would repeal the Declaratory Act and purge their Church from the other innovations introduced, I would not be prepared to join them. For when we came out the best of the office-bearers and people followed us, and their places were filled up with other office-bearers and members who were not reckoned worthy of such a position in the Church of Christ, and in the event of union these would have their vote in the Church Courts, and would carry by a majority any measure they desired to introduce into the Church. In that case we would

be in the same muddle as we were in before we separated in 1893. Tuesday, 2nd August, 1904.—Yesterday's report about the Free Church case is confirmed to-day by the Press. What a shock the decision must give to the U.F. Church! That is what they have for their backsliding. It should be a warning to others."

A testing time now came when it was to be shown how many were willing to stand by the testimony raised in 1893. In answer to a letter from one in a congregation where the seed of division was sown by such as had a desire to return to the Free Church, he writes:—"I received your letter in reference to the disagreement in your congregation. I am very sorry that there should be any discord in the congregation. I have been for some years, after we have taken up a separate position as a Church, going to your congregation to dispense the Communion, and, so far as I could see, there was great harmony among the people there. Indeed this was the case till some of the Anti-Unionist ministers went and told our people that there was now no difference between their Church and ours, and some in their simplicity believed them. Hence the attempt now made to form a kind of union between our congregation and that of the Anti-Unionists—at least in the way of mixing together at public worship. This, I believe, was the origin of the contention which has, alas! come to such a height among you. I am aware, as you remind me, that you were among the first there of the men that joined us in our testimony in defence of the Lord's cause in the land. From long acquaintance with you, I expected, and was very pleased, that you stood up in defence of the truth, while many others of whom we

expected otherwise failed to do so when the time of trial came, and I am glad that now, at the end of ten years, you say that 'we should stand fast in the liberty where-with Christ hath made us free.' We have great need of grace to enable us to stand fast in that liberty. The sifting that began in 1893 is still going on. Some by it have been already thrown out of our Church, and I should not wonder at all though others who were not sincere in espousing the cause of Christ in our Church might be thrown away by Him in whose hand the fan is." What he said came true, for some, who, at first, were ardent Free Presbyterians, proved unfaithful, as after events showed.

In 1905 a number of the ministers of the Church began to agitate for union with the Free Church, and as they failed in carrying the Synod with them, they went over to the Free Church. Naturally this agitation pained Mr Macfarlane. He was not present at the Synod meeting in Glasgow which rejected the motion brought forward by these brethren, but the following comments in his diary indicate his mind:—"The half-yearly meeting of the Synod of our Church was held in Glasgow to-day. I do not know what they have done, but I hope that if the young ministers who caused discord at the last meeting at Inverness tried to drag our Church into union with the Free Church they were frustrated in their bold and imprudent attempt. We shall hear a report of the proceedings soon, if spared. 15th November.—Heard to-day of the proceedings of Synod. These ministers moved that the Synod appoint a committee to confer with the Free Church anent Union. This motion, which was moved by the Rev. John MacLeod, Kames, was defeated by a counter-

motion moved by the Rev. Neil Cameron, Glasgow, by a majority of eleven. This is a result for which I feel thankful. I hear that there were some who did not vote for either motion. I have no faith in *neutrals*, for if they were to make known their minds they would be found on the wrong side. Lukewarm Christians are distasteful to the Lord (Rev. iii. 6), and they cannot be of much strength to His Church in the time of trial. The Synod also expressed disapproval of Mr MacLeod's conduct in lecturing in the Free Church College without consulting his brethren in the Presbytery. At his ordination he promised obedience to the Presbytery and Synod, and yet he took that step without the sanction of either! The Synod, therefore, acted justly in what they did to him for his arbitrary conduct in the matter. It is high time that our Church should let these ministers and other office-bearers, who think that they can act in a high-handed way, see that they must obey its laws or leave the Church. Those who agitate for union with the Free Church have now, I am told, adopted a new invention to hide the real end in view. They say they do not want Union, but simply to appoint a committee to confer with the Free Church to ascertain the points of agreement or difference between the two Churches! If Union is not the end in view, why appoint a committee at all? These men ought to act in a straightforward way, and not in a jesuitical way to hide their real intention. They cannot hide their intention under these pretensions from those who have their eyes open. In their extremity they betake themselves to these vain tactics. But hitherto they have not succeeded, and I hope they shall not succeed in future. It would be far more honest for them to walk over to the Free Church

and leave us in peace to carry on the work which the Lord in His over-ruling providence gave us to do. Our Church would get on much better without them, and the cause of Christ would lose nothing by their departure. 17th November.—I learn the Free Church Committee of Admission appointed a committee to confer with the ministers and elders in our Church who agitate for Union. It is likely that these will apply for admission into the Free Church at next Assembly as their efforts at the Synod were defeated. They shall, of course, be admitted. The sifting that is going on in our Church will throw out these from it to make it manifest though they were with us they were not of us. By this sifting the Lord is purifying our Church—throwing away those whom He knows would be of no use in maintaining a faithful testimony for His truth and cause in a back-sliding generation. The chaff shall be thrown away, but not the least grain of the wheat shall be lost. Oh! for grace to be faithful. ‘By grace ye stand.’ There are *inward* and *outward* trials through which God’s people must go.”

In connection with this cleavage and with an article which appeared in the *Northern Chronicle* at this time, he writes in his diary:—“Read a lengthy article in the *Northern Chronicle*, presumably by one of the dissenting ministers who left us, in defence of their rash action, with bitter attack on us for not forsaking the Scriptural position we had taken up in defence of God’s truth in 1893. Without any breach of charity, I think it is plain that it was the love of the world and not the love of God or His truth that made these ministers leave our Church. It would appear that they are conscious of this themselves,

and they are, therefore, trying to prop up themselves in their false position with plausible arguments to make their action appear justifiable in the eyes of the public. Some call us 'Seceders,' but we are not Seceders. The word *seceder*, according to the literal meaning, is to step aside from a position. We have not stepped aside from the position of the Church of Scotland for centuries. It is those who have left that position who are seceders from God's Word and worship. But what is the reproach or the obloquy of the creature in comparison to having God's approval in our stand on behalf of His Word and worship."

CHAPTER V.

Mr Macfarlane sends in his Resignation to the Presbytery.—Presbytery refer the matter to the Synod.—Synod accepts Resignation.—Presbytery's expression of deep regret.—Resignation Withdrawn.—New Agitation for Union with the Free Church (1918).—Ministerial Jubilee (1926).—Presentation.—His Death (4th November, 1926).—Last Words in his Diary quoted.—Quotation from Memoir of Rev. D. Macdonald, Shildaig.

IN 1915 Mr Macfarlane, feeling the infirmities of years, sent in a letter of resignation to his Presbytery. The Presbytery met with the congregation, and, after hearing the views of representative men in the congregation, it was decided "that in view of Mr Macfarlane's advanced age, the state of his health, and the distinguished character that belonged to him as a minister of the Gospel, they cannot see their way to oppose the resignation; and, on the other hand, in view of the fact that the Presbytery have not had time to consult with their esteemed father and brother, Mr Macfarlane, regarding his intended resignation, and in view of the deep sorrow which the Presbytery realise to have been felt by the congregation when they heard of the proposed resignation, and, further, in view of the circumstances that Mr Macfarlane himself is likely to be present at the Synod, the Presbytery decline to come to a definite conclusion, but refer the matter to the Synod for a decision. The Presbytery at the same time would venture to submit as a suggestion to the supreme court of the Church that, in the event of these deliberations resulting

in Mr Macfarlane's actual resignation, the said court would instruct the Financial Committee to see to it that Mr Macfarlane's salary would, as at present, be equal to that of the other ministers of the Church.' When the Synod met in June, 1915, it accepted Mr Macfarlane's resignation, and the Northern Presbytery appointed the Rev. John R. Mackay to act as interim-moderator of the Kirk-Session of Dingwall. In referring to the resignation the Presbytery placed the following expression of deep regret on their records:—"The Presbytery took occasion to put on record their sincere and deep regret at the prospect of their venerable and worthy father and brother, Rev. D. Macfarlane, being shortly to leave them so far as an active pastorate in Dingwall was concerned; they would desire to acknowledge their sense of indebtedness to the adorable Head of the Church, who permitted them for so many years to have pleasant and profitable fellowship, both in the courts of the Church and in the ministry of the Gospel, and their prayer was that Mr Macfarlane might be long spared, and that, even if his services as a pastor over a particular charge have come to an end, that he may be enabled still to take part in the work of the Church and the preaching of the Gospel among them." At next meeting of Presbytery Mr Macfarlane withdrew his resignation, to the great satisfaction of the Presbytery and to the joy of his congregation.

In 1918 another agitation for union with the Free Church was started through advances made by that Church to the Synod. This agitation caused Mr Macfarlane more grief than the former in 1905, as it was led by the Revs. J. R. Mackay and Alexander Macrae, men with whom he had been long associated in the bonds of the Gospel, and whom he highly respected and loved.

The agitation ended by four of our ministers* going over to the Free Church. Mr Macfarlane steadfastly set his face against this movement, as he had done to the former, and was cheered by the fact that the people stood faithfully by the testimony of the Free Presbyterian Church.

On 6th January, 1926, Mr Macfarlane attained his jubilee as a minister, and, with the hearty approval of the Presbyteries of the Church, it was decided to make a presentation to him. At the meeting of the May Synod, 1926, arrangements were made for making the presentation, and on Friday, 21st May, a small company of friends, with Rev. D. M. Macdonald, Moderator of Synod; Rev. D. Beaton, Clerk of Synod; Mr James Mackay, elder, representing the Southern Presbytery; and Mr Kenneth Matheson, elder, representing the Northern Presbytery, met in the Free Presbyterian Manse, Dingwall. The Moderator, after opening the proceedings with devotional exercises, presented an address from the Synod, and thereafter the Clerk handed Mr Macfarlane a cheque for a substantial sum. Mr Macfarlane thanked the Church cordially for their kind remembrance of him, and expressed the wish that he desired God's blessing to rest on all his friends. The happy function was brought to an end by the singing of Psalm cxxxiii. and the pronouncing of the benediction.

Though Mr Macfarlane had reached such a great age, his mental faculties remained almost as strong as ever up to the last. He spoke in his own pulpit invariably twice every Sabbath till the beginning of 1925,

* Revs. John R. Mackay, Alexander Macrae, Andrew Sutherland, and Norman Matheson.

when he spoke generally only once. He preached every Sabbath except the last two he was in the world. It was his wish that it should be so, and the Lord granted him that wish. On 1st November, 1926, he held a meeting to make arrangements for the approaching Communion in February. This was about the last business he transacted in this world. On Thursday night, the 4th November, 1926, he passed into the presence of the Lord who redeemed him, and whom he had served faithfully and lovingly in this world. To him the words of the Apostle might be truly applied: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Timothy iv. 7, 8). His funeral took place on Tuesday, 9th November, to the Dingwall Cemetery. There was a very large gathering at the funeral—friends from different parts in the north and south being present to show their respect to one whom they honoured for his faithfulness as a minister of Christ. All the ministers of the Free Presbyterian Church, with the exception of three who were unable to come, were present, as also the ministers of the different denominations in the town and a considerable number from neighbouring congregations. Solemn services were conducted in front of the manse, and the assemblage followed the remains of that which was mortal of Donald Macfarlane to the grave, leaving it there until his Lord will come to gather to Himself His redeemed.

The last words in his diary may be fitly quoted here:—"The day star arises inwardly in the heart of

believers before they pass from time to eternity to give them light going through the valley of the shadow of death and to dispel their doubts and fears, and to enable them to say in the full assurance of faith: 'We are going to heaven to be forever with the Lord.' To die is a solemn thing even for the Lord's people. It is dreaded by many, sometimes by some to whom death is gain. I am a weak creature myself, often harassed by unbelief, but I would not dread to enter eternity this moment. But I wait the Lord's time'' (4th January, 1909).

Mr Macfarlane lived long enough to see the Church which was so dear to him lengthen its cords and strengthen its stakes. It began its career in the world without a great flourish of trumpets. Its leaders, Mr Macfarlane and Mr Macdonald, were not men who courted the applause of men; both of them were Spirit-taught, and they made the honour of their Master the one great aim of their lives, and He honoured them both by a wealth of love and affection from God's people which is given to few in our day. This sketch of Mr Macfarlane's life may fitly conclude with his own words in reference to Mr Macdonald, with the substitution of his own name for Mr Macdonald's, and the addition of a few phrases to meet the changed conditions of the Free Presbyterian Church in 1926:—"As a minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland [Mr Macfarlane] saw the foundation stone of that Church laid in 1893, and took an active part in the laying of it. He lived to see the Church grow from a small beginning—like a grain of mustard seed—to a tree, spreading its branches through the Highlands, in some directions through the Lowlands of Scotland [and into England. It crossed

the Atlantic into Canada and the United States. It took root in South Africa and Australia, and at the time of Mr Macfarlane's death it had a student preparing for mission work among the Jews, who has since been settled in Palestine]. He saw this and was glad, and praised the Lord, to whom all the praise is due. Some men thought, said, and wished that our Church would not grow larger than its first small beginning. Dr W. C. Smith, speaking from the Moderator's chair in the General Assembly, compared our movement in defence of God's truth and cause to the steam issuing from a small teapot, that would soon exhaust itself by the process of evaporation. But he was disappointed. Dr Walker, the editor of the then *Free Church Monthly*, publicly predicted that our Church would, in the course of three or four years, become extinct, and the reason he gave was that our funds would by that time be exhausted! The wish was father to the thought. But so far as this prophecy of that rev. gentleman is concerned, all that he has for it is that he bears the mark of a false prophet (Jeremiah xxviii. 9). His prediction did not come to pass. Our movement was not of man but of God, and so long as we as a Church, faithfully adhere to and display the banner we have been enabled to lift up for the sake of the truth in our land in a backsliding age, no weapon formed against us shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against us in judgment we shall condemn. 'This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord.'

“By the divine blessing, [Mr Macfarlane] left the Free Presbyterian Church on a sure footing and in a prosperous condition. Ours is the duty of maintaining

the position to which the Lord has called us, and which He has hitherto owned and blessed. If we do so, we may expect that He will continue His loving-kindness to us, and bless us more and more, and make us a blessing. But if we yield in any point of our testimony, we may be sure that we shall fall behind in proportion as a Church witnessing for Christ and His truth. Great responsibility lies on the present and future ministers and other office-bearers of our Church. 'Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised' (Heb. x. 23). 'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen' (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).''—(*Memoir and Remains of Rev. D. Macdonald, Shildaig*, pp. 64, 65).

CHAPTER VI.

Mr Macfarlane as Man.—Christian.—Preacher.—Witness for the Truth.

WE purpose in this concluding chapter of the Memoir to give a review of Mr Macfarlane as a man, a Christian, a preacher and a witness for the truth. Physically, Mr Macfarlane was of slender build and of average height. His health was not very robust, but he was able to stand a great deal of fatigue. He dressed carefully, and his words in this connection describing Mr Macdonald may be applied to himself: "He dressed neatly and always appeared in public respectably clad, as a minister of Christ ought to be. Though a sharp rebuker of persons, whose vanity of mind broke forth and blossomed luxuriantly on the top of their heads, he approved of people clothing themselves in a becoming manner, according to their station in society." Mr Macfarlane possessed an exceptionally clear mind, a resolute will to follow the path of duty when it was clear to him, and a buoyant and cheerful spirit. This latter feature of his character was seen at its best when he was in the company of trusted friends. He had a keen sense of humour and a fund of stories, which he told in his own inimitable way. He had remarkable skill in making use of these stories to point a moral or drive home an argument.

As a Christian Mr Macfarlane, alike in his walk and conversation, bore abundant evidence of the great change that came over him in his youth. He had been brought face to face with God's law and learned that

his own righteousness would not avail. When brought into the liberty of the Gospel the Lord Jesus became precious to him as his only hope. He was severely tempted at times, and, on occasions, for long periods; but at length out of them all the Lord delivered him. He was not ignorant of Satan's devices, and by being sifted as wheat he became a succourer of many who passed through fiery temptations. His own account of these temptations are recorded in his diary, so that no further reference need be made to them here, except to say that occasionally they followed hard on experiences of great Gospel liberty and joy. It may be that such happy experiences were granted to him ere he was assailed by the enemy. Be that as it may, Mr Macfarlane knew the depths of Satan, but he also knew the heights of joy and comfort which his Lord graciously granted him. On one occasion he writes: "I felt as if at the very gates of heaven—tasting freely of the happiness which is enjoyed in full in the state of glory." On another occasion he writes: "Found great comfort from—'But God who is great in mercy'; could not contain myself; wept with joy." As he put it himself, he was often deprived of his comfort, but not of his hope. He also points out in his diary that Satan's method in tempting him was not so much in presenting some sin before him as a bait, but rather in discouraging his heart and weakening his hands in his endeavour to serve the Lord.

A very notable feature of his character as a Christian was his life of prayer. All who were privileged to enjoy his company could not help feeling here was a man who held frequent intercourse with heaven—in fact, one whose conversation was in heaven. He lived in an

atmosphere of prayer, and those who never knew him must feel in reading his diary that this was a man upon whom the Spirit of supplication and prayer had been richly poured. Such a dependence upon God brought him into communion with Him and His Son, Jesus Christ.

His deep sense of sin made him appreciate God's great provision in Christ, and though in darkness many a time yet the sun shone through the clouds and he went on his way rejoicing as one who had a good hope through grace. How deep his sense of sin was may be gathered from his own words: "I have now come to this, that I dare not complain of any trouble of mind or body but sin in its guilt, dominion and depravity in my nature." To him there was no ground for boasting—he was a sinner saved by grace—and his whole life proclaimed that great truth. A sense of his sinfulness and the Lord's sovereign mercy to him kept him humble all his days. His fine spirit of humility showed itself in his associations with his younger brethren in the Church courts. There was no attempt to domineer or make the younger men feel that his position in the Church as a father demanded respect from them. But what he never asked was most willingly given by them.

As a preacher Mr Macfarlane had a place in the estimation of the Lord's people that can be only accounted for by the fact that he was feeding them with the very finest of the wheat. It was not his oratorical gifts that captivated them, for, in the accepted sense of the word, he was no orator. Neither was it his lively manner in delivering his message that kept up their attention, for in presenting the truth he did so in a quiet, calm, deliberate way. But there was something

in the message that excelled all these, and that was the unction that accompanied the truth delivered. It fell like the gentle dew from heaven upon the hearts of those who delighted in the message of the everlasting Gospel. It was the unction of the Holy Ghost blessing His own truth to His chosen. God's people sat under such preaching with great delight. For one thing, the preacher knew what sin was, and knew also that God had provided salvation, and when he spoke to his fellow-men on these momentous matters those who had passed through kindred experiences received the truth "in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." He spoke from the heart to the heart.

He shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God. He believed the Bible to be the Word of God with all his heart, he received its truths unhesitatingly, and whether these were popular or unpopular with men never weighed with him as a servant of Jesus Christ. God's sovereign choice in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world was declared without any hesitancy as to whether it would be wise in this rebellious age to do so or not. He shunned not to declare that the rejecters of Christ would certainly go to hell at last. However awful that truth was, he felt it was his duty to proclaim it, and he did so, faithfully and solemnly warning his hearers that while it would be well with the righteous, it would be ill with the wicked. He never forgot in his preaching that he was only a servant in the Master's house, that the message was not His, but that of Him whom he served.

Mr Macfarlane excelled as an expository preacher. He had a special gift in getting at the meaning of the

passage he was expounding, especially in its relation to its context. No preacher we ever listened to excelled him in this gift. The result was that the message had a substantiality and a fitness that were alike satisfying and pleasing. One felt as one listened that doors were being opened that gave the hearer views of the truth that were altogether new and fresh. This gift enabled him to keep up the interest of his hearers while it instructed them. His preaching had always a sound doctrinal foundation even in his most experimental and practical discourses. He was careful to preach Law and Gospel, and in doing so he made use of doctrine, experience and practice. He did not believe in the modern teaching that the life is everything and that the doctrine is not of much account. By the doctrines of God's Word he made an appeal to the understanding of his hearers, but as one who rightly divided God's Word he did not confine himself to doctrine, and he would have readily consented to Dr Duncan's warning: "If you preach all doctrine, then that is all understanding and that is a monster. If you preach all experience, that is all heart and that is a monster; and if you preach all practice, that is all hands and feet and that is a monster. Preach doctrine, experience and practice." This is what Mr Macfarlane did.

As an experimental preacher he knew the different phases of sin in his own heart, its deceitfulness, its depravity, its deadening effects, its determination to gain the mastery. Added to this was his knowledge of Satan's devices. The result was, when he preached to the tried and tempted heritage of God they felt they were listening to one who had been in deep places him-

self and who could tell them the way he got deliverance. He could speak with knowledge of the work of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling and in His work of sanctification. In doing so he was speaking of what he himself had passed through, though he did not make his own experience a standard for others. He fully recognised that the Holy Spirit is sovereign in His dealings, working how, when and where He pleases.

Mr Macfarlane was careful as a preacher to make pointed application to his hearers of the doctrine and experience he preached. He did not leave them with the impression that it was a matter of indifference whether they practised what was set before them or not. They were stewards to whom a great trust was given, and it became them to be very diligent because the time was short. It was with no cold and indifferent heart he delivered his message, but as one who yearned that Christ would be formed in the hearts of his hearers as the hope of glory. He had to weep because his labours showed so little fruit, as many a faithful messenger of God has had to do, but he prayed for the salvation of his hearers. "Oh! that the Lord would begin to convert sinners," he writes, "I pray for it and labour for it and look for an answer to the Hearer and Answerer of prayer." He could say with the Apostle: "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 2).

A feature of Mr Macfarlane's sermons which is worthy of notice is their remarkable clearness and simplicity. The first characteristic was due to the fact that he had a good style both in English and Gaelic,

and the latter was due to clear thinking and mastery of his subject. It was not the result of paucity of thought or mental poverty, but rather the reverse. Hence his sermons had an attractiveness for a mixed congregation that would not be felt if the same truths had been presented in a more involved way. The writer recalls a sermon he heard from Mr Macfarlane preached in St Jude's well over thirty years ago on the doctrine of justification by faith. It was one of the simplest sermons as far as the language and the treatment were concerned that he ever heard, but it was listened to with entranced interest by the congregation. A book of sermons by Mr Macfarlane was published in 1918, and the present volume includes a number also, so that the reader will be able to judge for himself the kind of teaching he delivered to his hearers.

Mr Macfarlane expected, as every minister of Christ has a right to expect, that no unbecoming disrespect should be shown to the Gospel message in its delivery, but it was only occasionally he rebuked, but when he did so the rebukes were remembered by the culprit and others. On one occasion he was annoyed by a man continually pulling out his watch to see the time. He stopped his discourse and said: "There is a man present who has no interest in what I am saying. His eye is on time; mine is on eternity." He then quietly proceeded with his discourse.

Mr Macfarlane's steadfastness as a witness for the truth now demands our attention. Reference has already been made to his natural timidity, so that the noble stand he made in 1893 is not to be set down to natural courage. Neither is it to be attributed to mere

ecclesiastical belligerency or a desire for a place in the sun. His most reckless enemies could not charge him with that. When he took his stand in 1893 he was known but to a limited number in the North of Scotland. He had lived a country minister's quiet life, doing his duty faithfully in proclaiming the Gospel, and when he stood forth as a champion of the truth it was not because he sought that position, but because no one else was courageous or faithful enough to take it. His concern for the cause of truth was his motive in making such a stand. What it cost him is known only to the Lord that gave him grace to stand, but we may learn from what he has written about those who resiled from the position then taken up how deeply impressed he was in his mind of the righteousness of the step taken in 1893. Others might waver, who wrote and spoke stronger than ever he did, but he remained steadfast to the end. A friend of long standing, who passed through the stirring events prior to 1893 and after, writes thus of him: "Mr Macfarlane was a man on whom one could depend. He sat down and counted the cost before he began to build. Consequently, one could be sure that, however long one would be without meeting him, he would be of the same mind as he was when he parted with him. He never changed his mind in the least as to the duty of the Free Presbyterian Church to hold by the position taken up in 1893. He opposed Union with the Free Church when the last effort was made to have the two bodies brought together as firmly as he did on a former occasion" (Rev. Neil Cameron in the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, xxxi., 369). Bunyan's description of Mr Stand-fast passing over the river may

be fitly quoted here, as Mr Macfarlane was certainly a Mr Stand-fast: "When Mr Stand-fast had thus set things in order, and the time being come for him to haste him away, he also went down to the river. Now there was a great calm at that time in the river; wherefore Mr Stand-fast, when he was about half-way in, stood a while and talked to his companions that had waited upon him thither; and he said, This river has been a terror to many; yea, the thoughts of it also have often frightened me. Now, methinks, I stand easy, my foot is fixed upon that upon which the feet of the priests that bare the ark of the covenant stood, while Israel went over this Jordan. The waters, indeed, are to the palate bitter, and to the stomach cold; yet the thoughts of what I am going to, and of the conduct that waits for me on the other side, doth lie as a glowing coal at my heart. I see myself now at the end of my journey, my toilsome days are ended. I am going now to see that head that was crowned with thorns, and that face that was spit upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith; but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with Him in whose company I delight myself. I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and wherever I have seen the print of His shoe in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too. His name has been to me as a civet-box; yea, sweeter than all perfumes. His voice to me has been most sweet; and His countenance I have more desired than they that have most desired the light of the sun. His word I did use to gather for my food, and for antidotes against my faintings. 'He has held me, and hath kept me from mine iniquities; yea, my steps hath He strengthened in His way.' Now, while he was thus in

discourse, his countenance changed, his strong man bowed under him; and after he had said, Take me, for I come unto thee, he ceased to be seen of them.”

Who would true valour see;
Let him come hither;
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather.
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent,
His first avow'd intent
To be a pilgrim.

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY.*

PREACHING at Duthil on the text, Isaiah xxxii. 12, Mr Macfarlane closed by asking—Are you resigned to your lot in providence? Do you believe that, to put it in this form, your measure had been taken from all eternity as to your lot in providence? Your neighbour's suit would not do for you, nor would yours fit him. Christ sits on the circle of the earth. All power in heaven and on earth is given to Him. He is a covert to His people from the tempest of the difficulties and of the afflictions of this life, and if this is true, as it is, what do you say of His providence—of His dealings with you? You say: “Blessed providence—blessed dealings—blessed afflictions.” Oh! that is the very thing you should say of this. He shall make all things to work together for good to His people. Of that sermon he writes: “I felt much strengthened and very happy preaching the above sermon at Duthil on Monday of the Communion, though very weak and hard before commencing. Oh! how pleasant to be preaching the blessed Gospel when the Lord is present and enjoyed by the soul. It is He that makes the sermon when He comes, then there is a

* Mr Macfarlane began to keep a diary in 1880 and continued noting down his thoughts and experiences until 1892. From that year to 1899 there is a blank. He ceased keeping his diary in 1909, and from the entries now before the reader there will be a feeling of regret for the blank between 1892 and 1899—a very important period in the history of the Free Presbyterian Church, and also in Mr Macfarlane's own ministerial career. One could have wished that the diary had been continued nearer to the year of his death.

sermon indeed. ‘ One day in Thy courts is better than a thousand.’ ”

Sabbath, 21st September, 1880.—Enjoyed the prayer meeting in the evening conducted by Mr Rose very much indeed. It is a privilege to hear others that are taught of God. My poor soul was needy, and I felt refreshed and strengthened. Oh! it is a privilege to sit under a Gospel ministry: I enjoy hearing the Gospel immensely. I think my parched and withered soul would flourish yet if I would hear the Gospel. My poor soul got more of the manna in the evening than during the day. Oh! it is a wonder that He would look upon such as I am and give me even the least crumb that falls from His table. But He is the Wonderful and He saves by grace, and is glorified in doing so. Oh! to know Him and to receive of His fullness. Christ is the life of His people, the true bread that came down from heaven which if a man eat thereof he shall never die. “ He that hath the Son hath life.” “ When Christ, who is our life, shall be revealed then shall ye be revealed with Him in glory.” O blessed, O sweet Christ! Come to me! Abide with me! Then I would be content. I would preach Thee to my fellow-sinners, publish Thy praise in the earth. Thy yoke would be indeed easy to me and Thy burden light. Thou art the light of the world and the light and life of Thy people, their all in all. Manifest Thyself to me in Thy rich mercy and saving grace, in Thy beauty and excellency to draw my heart to Thee, to dispel my darkness, to remove my doubts and fears, to renew my youth as that of the eagle so that I may yet have a breathing time in the world and strength to serve Thee, to glorify Thee and redeem the time. In the past I have indeed

been an unprofitable servant. Oh! for grace to bear fruit unto Thee—"Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit." I derive more benefit from hearing others that I know to be God's people than from hearing myself, and I generally get good from hearing about the substitutionary sufferings of Christ in room of guilty sinful men—God's way of salvation by grace—in a manner in which He is glorified when He saves sinners, even the chief. I think I see more and more my need of free grace. Oh! that the eyesalve would be applied to the eyes of my soul to enable me to see more of the infinite fulness that is in Christ and that my withered hands would be strengthened to draw out of that fulness. My poor soul has been long famishing for want of the bread of life—often prevented from partaking of it with the fear that I had no right to it, and if I was sometimes favoured, as I think I sometimes was, to taste of that bread, such thick darkness would cover my soul afterwards as to compel me to doubt whether it was really a saving taste or not.

Wednesday, 16th March, 1881.—Spent a good part of this day at the throne of grace humbling myself, confessing my sins, and earnestly imploring the Lord's mercy and the light of His gracious countenance, the want of which left me so miserable yesterday and the former part of to-day. Blessed be His glorious Name, He did not leave me to seek His face in vain. The Lord bowed down His ear and heard me, showed me His salvation and enabled me to trust in Him. I thanked the Lord for the agonizing trial that brought me to the footstool of His mercy. I was just needing something to rouse me up from the lukewarm condition into which I have been for some time. If no milder measure will

do the Lord will use severe trials to bring His people back to Himself when they wander from Him. I seek to add my amen to His dealings in this respect. I have cause to say at least in some measure: "It is good for me that I was afflicted." It is good to wait on the Lord to get the best of the wheat, and the honey from the rock, to drink at the fountain head. The most difficult part of the work is to begin. Once that difficulty is overcome by grace it is easy, pleasant, and profitable. May this time of reviving be but the commencement of a greater revival in my own needy soul, the souls near and dear to me, and in the souls of the flock committed to me.

August, 1891.—Referring lately in the course of a sermon to the power some ascribed to free will, I said that having given some attention to the subject all I saw man could do by *free will* was to destroy himself. Adam was left to the freedom of his own will, and by that freedom he brought himself and his posterity to ruin; and if man in the state of perfection did this, how is it possible for sinful man to raise himself up to that perfect state from which he had fallen? He can only be raised up by the will of God. Paul said: "When it *pleased God* . . . to reveal His Son in me" (Gal. i. 15, 16). Man who is spiritually dead must, if at all saved, be quickened by the Spirit of God—"And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sin" (Eph. ii. 1). Those who ascribe such power to free will would change their mind on this subject if they were taught by the Holy Spirit as the Apostle was. The tendency of the Churches in our day is towards Arminianism. The proposed Declaratory Act in the Free Church is an evidence of this. But, blessed be

God, there is a remnant, according to the election of grace, in the Church who will never submit to such doctrines, and those, if faithful in contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, will by the grace of God be instrumental in perpetuating that faith and in transmitting it to coming generations. Though few, let them not be discouraged, for God is on their side and will give them the victory. "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."

Wednesday, 26th August, 1891.—Visited Mr Crichton, Fassifern, this afternoon. Found him very kind. He expressed himself as highly pleased with my sermon last Sabbath, and said he hoped I would be long spared to preach sound doctrine. I believe he is a godly man. He is of the Church of England, is thoroughly Calvinistic in his views, and appreciates the Gospel and sound doctrine on all points pertaining to sin and salvation. His presence in the church and his earnest attention to the word preached is a great encouragement to me. I love the Lord's people of whatever denomination they are, for they are all one in Christ. Blessed be the Lord, there are some who know the voice of Christ and who delight to hear it. Such will not be satisfied with the unsound doctrine. I preach the doctrines of the Bible, the doctrines which have been blessed to my own needy soul. I mention this not in a boastful spirit, I think, but in humility and gratefulness to the God of all grace, for "by the grace of God I am what I am." To Him all the glory is due. "Without Me," Christ says, "ye can do nothing." This truth God's people learn by experience from the day that they were awakened by the Holy Spirit till

they are brought by the grace of God to the rest that remains in everlasting glory. This is a lesson that cannot be learned but in Christ's school, and none can teach it but Himself, and none can learn it but His own disciples. "They shall all be taught of God." Lord Jesus, teach me, quicken, enlighten, and sanctify me by Thy Spirit and Word that I may show forth Thy praise.

September 13th, 1891.—Prayed at the bedside of a careless, dying man. Truly it is difficult to pray at the bedside of hardened sinners when they come to die. To speak to them of the Saviour is no good news to them, as they are not convinced of their need of salvation, and to tell them of their danger is far from being believed. The Lord has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, and His people have no pleasure in their death. "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" "To-day if ye hear His voice, harden not your heart." "This is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." The removal by death is a warning to us all, and more especially to the young. There are more dying young than old. But, oh! how few take the warning.

Thursday, 17th September, 1891.—Conducted a diet of catechising, the subject dwelt upon being: "What is sin?"—a very important subject. I have endeavoured to sow the good seed of the Word. May the Lord make it effectual unto the salvation of souls! It is of the utmost importance to instruct in the Scriptures, which are able as the means to make wise unto salvation. The work of catechising is an excellent means for that purpose. It proves often successful where preaching

fails, and is most helpful to the proper understanding of the Word preached. It is also a profitable exercise for the minister himself—at least I find it so—and I purpose to continue it for my own good and the good of others. It is very remarkable that we have a clear statement of all the fundamental doctrines of the Bible contained in this small book, the Shorter Catechism. He who knows this book knows theology.

Sabbath, 27th September, 1891.—Preached from John x. 9 in English and conducted the prayer meeting in the evening. Had much liberty all day. Called —, my brother, to pray at the evening meeting, and was much pleased and affected with his prayer. I believe he is a changed man. Listening to his prayer I felt melted to tears of joy. Oh! what cause for thankfulness to God for His mercy to my own soul and to some of my brothers and sisters! When brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus I often prayed for the rest of the family and spoke to themselves about the great concern of their immortal souls, as they were then in a state of nature, and now I have reason to praise the Lord for showing mercy to some of them—two brothers and two sisters, and who knows but He will have mercy on those still in a state of nature but still in the land of the living and who have not given evidence of a saving change? Although I seek and would rejoice in the salvation of others, yet I feel more for my relatives according to the flesh, and would rejoice the more in seeing them saved in and by Christ. The Apostle Paul felt the same concern about his kinsmen. Grace does not supersede natural affection. It rather rectifies and intensifies it.

29th September, 1891.—Attended the funeral of Mr C. B. Mr — read and prayed in Gaelic at the house and prayed in English at the grave. His English prayer contained such expressions as—"Thy servant whom thou hast taken away," "All souls are united to God in Christ and shall rise to a glorious resurrection," "Let us have this larger hope." All souls united to God in Christ! The righteous and the wicked. That is not true. Believers, and they only, are united to God in Christ. Then as to the "larger hope." What does it mean? It is employed to mean that there shall be another dispensation of mercy after death for the salvation of men and even devils in hell!! According to this awful doctrine, all that have been cast into hell—men and evil angels—shall be brought to heaven, as all souls by their way, good and bad, are united to God in Christ. This is most dangerous doctrine, and when expressed in fine language it is very apt to pass in the estimation of the unwary as pure gospel. There were, however, some present who could not be imposed upon, and who at once detected Satan in the guise of the serpent. May God deliver and preserve old and young from false teachers.

Thursday, 8th October, 1891.—Under a sense of my deadness, formality and unprofitableness in the work of the Lord, I feel in some measure my great need of the Spirit of God to quicken me and to bring me nigh to God in Christ and give me a renewed conception of the importance of the holy work of the ministry in which I am engaged and grace to enable me to preach the Word with unction, power, and love to God and precious souls, so that the Gospel may be experienced as the power of

God unto salvation by both saints and sinners! My own soul is so dead, the congregation is dead, and unless the Lord come to bless us we shall wither like a sapless leaf. O! Lord, revive us again that thy people may rejoice in thee. "Stir up thy strength and might and come for our salvation."

Friday, 9th October, 1891.—Felt somewhat revived in soul and some gratitude to God for His great mercy to me. Felt greater power on my spirit repeating and meditating on Psalm xc. 14 to end. Enabled in some measure to set my affections on things above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. My desire after the Lord is sometimes vehement and cannot be fully satisfied till I am in the full enjoyment of Him in heaven if through free grace it be my lot to get there. Writing at this time of the poor attendance on the means of grace by the people of a part of the parish, he says:—"The former minister had hard work in making them attend church. They attended from fear of the minister rather than love to God's ordinances, and as it was forced work they soon relapsed. Oh! that God by His Spirit would move them. Then it would be as difficult to keep from as it is now to bring them to it. There is need of wisdom. 'Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves.' Even in rebuking sin there is need of wisdom. I have always rebuked *sharply* but with a view to the sinner's good; but I found that in some cases the person rebuked was rather repelled than drawn. He could not but see that I was faithful, but I fear he failed to see that it was for his good. Oh! my need of *wisdom* as well as *faithfulness* so that sinners may see that I want to turn them from the error of

their ways to God. Ministers are said to be ‘fishers of men,’ and there is great need of spiritual skill and wisdom in order to catch men. The sharp hook of the law must be baited with love and gospel truth, and the Word, whether Law or Gospel, must be spoken in love—“Speaking the truth in love.”

2nd November, 1891.—Rested to-day so far as the body is concerned, with the exception of a short walk. Felt at evening worship something of the efficacy of the blood of Christ which made me sing anew the song of Moses and the Lamb. Nothing can enable one to sing this wonderful song but the application by the Spirit of the blood that was shed for the satisfaction of justice and the remission of sins. That will make “the tongue of the dumb sing” as well as “the lame man to leap as an hart.” One may sing with the lips and with the understanding under a sense of sinfulness, but when the blood is applied the conscience sings and then there is true melody in the heart. I find that the first taste of Gospel liberty after bondage is the sweetest. It may not last long in the experience, but one feels that he is made free by the Son, and therefore free indeed. Sin is the greatest bondage; deliverance from sin is the greatest liberty! Deliverance from the guilt of sin is obtained by forgiveness through the blood of Christ. Deliverance from the depravity of sin is by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit on the ground of the blood. The believer needs the blood of Christ till he is made perfect in glory. Then he will sing “Unto Him that loved us and washed us in His own blood” with a melody that is peculiar to heaven! During his pilgrimage on earth he is only *learning* to sing that

song of songs. There is a sweetness in learning it to which there is no comparison in all the world's pleasures put together, and when it is perfectly learned no tongue of man or angel can describe the happiness of the redeemed as they stand before the throne above. Let the poor people of God who are now in the valley of tears, groaning under a sense of the body of sin and death, lift up their heads with courage. Their salvation draws nigh. "The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Tuesday, 3rd November, 1891.—Been visiting. The people in the parish, even the most careless, like to be visited by the minister. This is an encouragement, and I purpose, through grace, "to do the work of an evangelist." Indeed, I see I require to act as a missionary among them if I am to be of use to them, and I feel disposed to do the work of a missionary. It will do good to my own soul to be daily engaged in the work of the Lord. It is good for soul and body. Now is the time for work, rest is at the end, and there is some rest in work. Indeed, to work for the Lord by His own grace is *rest*—rest of the purest kind. The service of sin is work—hard work; but the Lord's service is *rest*. In glory the redeemed serve Him without ceasing, and they enjoy perfect rest.

November, 1891.—When I am not engaged in the public serving God I find unspeakable happiness in private meditation, and this makes me sometimes write my thoughts. "Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaks." Yea, it must speak. And when there

are no fellow-creatures to speak to it is a relief to write down on paper something of what passes through the mind. There is a double benefit in expressing one's meditation. I seldom write a sermon in full, but I, as a rule, write a short skeleton, and the clothing with flesh and sinews, and the giving of life depends on the freedom I get from the Lord breathing on my soul by the Spirit from on high. I find private meditation a good preparation for preaching. When I am favoured with spiritual mindedness I find it easy and delightful to preach. I must feed on the hidden manna myself before I can be an instrument to minister to others. The Gospel is preached in the *letter only* if the preacher has not tasted of its blessings himself.

Tuesday, 10th November, 1891.—I have reason to be thankful that I enjoy peace of mind though my body suffers. I am favoured with this peace to such a degree as makes me “glory in tribulations,” and I feel disposed to give myself wholly to the Lord to make me an instrument in His hand to promote His glory and advance His kingdom in this part of the vineyard.

Friday, 31st November, 1891.—Went to Ballachulish in the morning. Opened “the question”—Mr Gray* closed. There was a good number of “the men,” who spoke well and to the point. Heard for the first time Mr Neil Cameron, student. I liked him exceedingly. He spoke with great solemnity, clearness, unction and impressiveness.

Monday.—Preached in Gaelic from 2 Thess. i. 7-10. So far as my own soul is concerned, I may say that “the

* Rev. Donald Gray, Saltcoats.

best wine was left to the last.” I had great liberty during the first sermon, and when speaking of the glorious rest Christ would give to the redeemed at His second advent, I felt as if at the very gates of heaven, tasting freely of the happiness which is enjoyed in full in the state of glory! I got a feast, ever blessed be God! He knows that I was needing it. Others confessed that they were drinking at the fountain too. Mr Neil Cameron said it must have been the greatest freedom I got in preaching. I mention this so as to remember the mercy of God to me, and the most unworthy of all His people, and that I may have something to serve as an argument when I am assailed by unbelief. It is good at such times to remember the Lord’s former lovingkindness. When Satan uses as a weapon against me my past sins, it is my duty to meet him with the weapon of God’s past mercies to me. God’s people of old did so, and put to flight the armies of the aliens. It was pleasant to meet so many of the Lord’s people on the mount of ordinances, and to meet Mr Neil Cameron, a most promising young student, preparing for the holy ministry. He is a very bright Christian, and very zealous for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. There is great need for such men now-a-days. He told me there were about twenty students between the three colleges who were prepared to stand up for the truth. There is hope for the Church yet.

It was through unfaithful young ministers entering the Church the declension began, and it will be as of old, by God raising up faithful ministers, the evil shall be counteracted and overcome. If He would continue to raise up godly and faithful ministers, the old leaven of heresy in the Free Church would be thrown out, or at

least found in the minority. The men of progress in the wrong direction, however, are doing their utmost to frustrate the hope. They will try, and I have no doubt they shall succeed, to pass the Declaratory Act into law at the first Assembly, and this will make the Free Church Arminian in her doctrine. That will very likely cause another Disruption. But even in that case, those who stand firm to the truth would be stronger, and there would be hope for the cause of Christ in Scotland. Another Disruption is not desirable, but it may become a necessity.

When the Declaratory Act is passed into law the darkness will be greater still in the Church which ought to be "a light in the world," and it is very likely that matters shall go from bad to worse till the darkness of idolatry cover the kingdom from end to end as it was before the Reformation. Others shall then enjoy the light of the Gospel, viz., the heathen to whom we are now sending the Gospel. It is not improbable but it will be by these heathen the Gospel shall be sent to our kingdom. I can imagine a conference being held in Africa for the purpose of sending the Gospel to Scotland! to enlighten the people who have lost the means of grace through the unfaithfulness of those who now do their utmost (perhaps unwittingly) to drive away the glad tidings of salvation from our land. And when the Gospel comes to our land through converted African missionaries, that will be the dawn of the glorious days at the end of which Christ shall come again.

1st January, 1892.—In the good providence of God, I am now entered on a new year! It is a few minutes past twelve o'clock. I wish to begin it by praising the

Lord for His mercy to my soul. It is now fully thirty-six years since He brought me by His Word and Spirit to ask, "What must I do to be saved?" In His own good time He led me to His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, in whom I found salvation. During that period I experienced much of the preciousness of Jesus and the bitterness of sin. Hitherto the Lord has helped me. I intend to preach on Sabbath from Proverbs viii. 7, and in Gaelic from Psalm lxxxiv. 7, suitable subjects for the first Sabbath of a new year. The former text is calculated to stir up young and old to seek Christ early. The latter is encouraging to the Lord's people who are sojourning to the heavenly Zion. The Lord prepare me for His holy Sabbath and service. Prayer is a great means of inward preparation; studying the Word the best means of the outward preparation. Both are necessary for a minister. Let me then give myself to these exercises, that "out of the fulness of the heart the mouth may speak," looking to the Lord for the excellency of the power.

It is not, however, once a year the Lord's people remember His dealings with them in the past. If they forget them, they shall be brought into straits which shall make them remember them.

16th March, 1899.—I was at Portree Communion last Sabbath, and found it a most refreshing season. Christ, who was so rich in mercy to me for some months back, continued His lovingkindness to me on the mount of ordinances. I believe in going forward to know the Lord. I found more evidence of my interest in Christ this winter, and so it was indeed a bright summer to me—brighter than I had during the 43 years of my past

profession. "For me to live is Christ." I must preach the Gospel, for necessity is laid upon me. "The love of Christ constraineth me." Although I had a thousand souls, a thousand bodies, and a thousand tongues, they would be all laid out to declare the glory of my Redeemer, and after all my efforts I would only touch the hem of His garment, for "He is altogether lovely." "O my soul, bless the Lord!"

[There is a blank in the Diary from 1892 to 1899].

April, 1899. Received a letter from the Rev. Neil Cameron, Glasgow, about the Communion in his own congregation on the 4th and in Edinburgh on the 3rd Sabbath, urging me to go to both. If it is the Lord's will, I intend going. I mentioned to him in a letter lately that the Lord visited me this winter with a rich blessing, and he says in his letter to-day, "It seems to me that, whatever the meaning of it is, the Lord is giving larger draughts out of the fountain of life to some in our midst this year than ever before. I am sometimes thinking that some sore trial may be near at hand; but we see that when the Lord promised to pour His Spirit, the house of David was promised the first baptism of it. Who knows but He will pour it also upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem?" There may be sore trials near at hand, but it is good to have from Himself evidences of a sure title to the glorious inheritance where no enemy can disturb the felicity of the heirs of glory. In this world they shall have tribulation, but none there. Whatever trials may be before me, I welcome the gracious visits of Christ to my needy soul. I am more afraid of what is on this side of Jordan than what is beyond.

25th September, 1900.—I feel in these days somewhat in the frame of mind I was in in my younger days, when I sought the Lord in a measure of heart-seeking, repentance, and much waiting at the throne of grace in private, in the house, and in secret places in the open field. It was better with me then than now. Oh! that the Lord would revive me by His Spirit to call upon His name. Prayer is the secret of success with God. It is the breathing of the soul after God. “My soul thirsteth for the living God.” It is the life of grace seeking the fountain of life—God. This life comes from God, and seeks unto Him as the streams flow to the great ocean whence they came. The Spirit of prayer is given to bring us back unto God. How precious and beneficent that Spirit is! Oh! for more and more of the Spirit of grace and supplication. A praying soul is the successful soul. He will get all he needs in the name of Christ. “Ask and ye shall receive.” “If ye ask anything in My name,” Christ says, “I will do it.”

1st October, 1900.—When preaching from the above yesterday, I saw and pointed out the awful state of the sinner so long as he continued in a state of nature. He cannot know the things of the Spirit of God. Before he can know them there must be the supernatural work of the Spirit, making him a new creature—a spiritual man. Then he shall know these things and go forward to know the Lord. Oh! that He would begin to convert sinners. I thirst for this. If I would get my desire, it would encourage me in the Lord’s work more than words can express. I pray for it and labour for it, and look for an answer to the Hearer and Answerer of prayer.

24th October, 1900.—I wish to record here a peculiar experience I had for the last two weeks or so—an experience which presents the greatest contrast between unspeakable happiness in the enjoyment of God and unspeakable misery in the want of that enjoyment. For several days before I went to the north end of the Island [of Raasay] to preach there and in the Island of Rona, I was favoured in a large measure with the spirit of prayer, and enjoyed so much nearness to God and enjoyment of His gracious presence that I felt exceedingly happy, and hopeful that the Lord was about to convert sinners in the congregation. The days of old seemed to return in my experience. I left home for the north end of the island on Friday, the 5th of this month, with a felt sense of the Lord's presence with me, and in a frame of mind which made me willing to preach the Gospel to my fellow-sinners. I preached ten times between Torran and Rona with great freedom and enjoyment. I preached the first Sabbath at Torran and the second at Rona, besides preaching in the several districts on the week days. The first text which I preached from (at Torran) was Psalm lxxiii. 28. a passage of Scripture which accorded with my happy experience. But a change took place after the evening service on the second Sabbath—the Sabbath I was at Rona. Very soon after the work of that Sabbath was over, a flash of heart-atheism passed like lightning through my mind, threatening to raze to the ground the very foundation of my hope. Then my happiness was soon turned into misery, and my joy into mourning. From that time I am suffering more or less from that awful temptation. I am endeavouring to resist it, but with little success. The Lord alone can deliver me. After

I was ordained at Strathconon in the year 1876 I suffered severely for three years from the same temptation. My deliverance from it then was gradual, but the Lord did deliver me, and although I had touches of it afterwards, the temptation did not come to the same height, nor did it continue so long. He who delivered me then is able to deliver me now, and unto Thee, O Lord, I look.

The Lord's lovingkindness to me before this temptation may have been designed to prepare me for the severe trial. I did not, however, expect such a trial in the happy frame of mind I was in before it came. I took His great goodness to me as one of the *anniversaries* with which the Lord used to favour me in former times at this season of the year—in 1856 He called me by His Word and Spirit to arise and follow Him, and as a rule He reminds me of this by giving me special tokens of His favour about the same time yearly. The Lord at such times gives me so much of His goodness in His gracious presence that makes me truly happy, and although I should learn from past experience that these tokens of His favour are not to abide long in my experience, yet when I enjoy them I am still like a little child unwilling to part with them. Notwithstanding that, I have not been able to keep my grip of these good things in the past, when they are vouchsafed to me again I am of the opinion that I shall not let them go now. But I am disappointed. I cannot keep them any longer than they are kept for me. They are not the Lord Himself. Experience changes, but He changes not. He is Jehovah and He changes not, and, therefore, His people are not destroyed.

Tuesday, 30th October, 1900.—Dreamt, a little before I awoke this morning, that I was in the company of some of the Lord's people, and that I was asked to return thanks after meal. Seeing that there were others present whom I considered more fit to engage in that duty, I declined, but on being pressed I yielded. Feeling myself a great sinner, my mind opened to the wonderful way of salvation by grace very soon after I began to speak, and I felt really happy. It was only a few words that I said, and concluded with these words: "Who ever heard of such a gracious way of salvation! There never was anything like it in the past, and there shall never be anything like it in the future. It stands alone among God's works!" I awoke with great comfort, and praised the Lord for showing me anew the way of salvation in my sleep. This was a dream, but I have no doubt the Lord was in it, and comforted my soul in my sleep. I was taught to know the Gospel *awake*, and the Lord revealed Himself several times to me in *my sleep*. This was as a sweet savour to my soul, so that I could say, "I love the Lord." "O taste and see that God is good."

22nd January, 1901.—Found great comfort from—"But God who is great in mercy," etc. (Eph. ii.). Could not contain myself. Wept with joy. O the indebtedness under which the redeemed are to God for salvation! They cannot fully realize this in this world. They shall only have glimpses of it here; the fulness of it is reserved for heaven.

22nd January, 1901.—Queen Victoria died to-day at 6.30 p.m. She was eighty-two years of age, and reigned for the period of over sixty-three years

the longest reign in British history. The departed Sovereign was personally possessed of many good qualities, and in her high capacity as Queen she was the best, with the exception of George III., who occupied the throne of the realm since the time of Edward the VI. Whether she was really a good person is to be left with the Judge of all, but this kingdom enjoyed many outward privileges under her rule, and we should be thankful if they would be continued under the sovereignty of her son, who succeeds her to the British throne. May the Lord give him grace and wisdom to rule in the fear of the Lord!

Friday, 26th August, 1904.—After a time of deadness, I feel a little reviving to-day. The beginning of it came at the prayer meeting last night, when I was speaking from Zech. xii. 10, and it continues to-day, not so much in the actual enjoyment of the Lord as in a *desire* after Him. The desire I found in the past to be the forerunner of the enjoyment. Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble (Ps. x.). If the spirit of grace and supplication was given to me, I might expect a revival of religion in my own poor soul and in the congregation. On the day of Pentecost the Spirit of promise was given first to the disciples at Jerusalem, and then, through the preaching of Peter, to the great multitude. When a true revival begins among the people, the ministers of the Gospel get the first shower. They are endued with power from on high to preach the Gospel by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, and sinners shall be convinced and converted, and the Lord's people shall be edified and revived, and begin anew to rejoice in the Lord as when they first tasted that He was gracious, and to mourn for their past lukewarmness. It will be in

their experience like a *new conversion*. They shall go on anew to know, enjoy, and serve the Lord till they again lose the effect of the baptism of the Spirit they received. Then they find themselves dead and destitute till they get another baptism to revive them and set them on their feet again on the rock, Christ, and a new song put in their mouth, even praise to their God. “Without Me,” Christ says, “ye can do nothing.” But they can do all things through Christ strengthening them. There are many ups and downs in the experience of God’s people on their way to heaven where they shall enjoy perfect rest.

7th November, 1904.—After a long time of a sense of deadness, Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, came to me and raised me out of the grave. The first reviving I got was a few days ago before going to Beaully to preach. I preached on the manna (Ex. xvi. 15), and got a good measure of the spiritual food for my own needy soul, and who knows but others present got some too? When I get some myself, I cannot but think the Lord’s people get some also. I found Christ that day—not for the first time—and He is still with me. I felt Him near when preaching yesterday. Oh! that He would abide with me. It is easy and pleasant to preach when Christ is present. The minister is then “as the pen in the hand of a ready writer.” The cases of God’s people open up to him, and he speaks from the heart to the heart, and brings Christ before them to suit all their cases.

15th November, 1904.—Returned home from Tain, where I have been assisting at the Communion. I preached there once before, in 1877, when I was minister at Strathconon. I was Moderator of Synod of Ross that

year, and preached from 1 Peter iii. 18. There were at that time, and long before, two sermons preached at the meeting of the Synod—one in Gaelic and the other in English. Dr Kennedy, who was Moderator of Synod the previous year, preached from Heb. iii. 2. It was a memorable sermon, and is in print. There were large congregations present from Tain and neighbourhood, among whom were many of the Lord's people, the great majority of whom have since passed away to their eternal rest. Ross-shire, in common with other parts of the Highlands, is a spiritual wilderness in comparison with what it had been in those days. I was happy at the Communion, and felt thankful that I went. For some time before I went the Lord favoured me with a revival of the Spirit, and I was hopefully anticipating that the Lord would be with us at the Communion, and I was not disappointed in my expectation. I felt that the Lord was with me every time that I preached. The most of my texts were from the Song of Solomon. My frame of mind led me to that book of sweet communion between Christ and His Church. I mention this, not, I hope, from any selfish motive, but from a sense of duty to acknowledge His goodness to me, and I hope to others present. I was in such a happy frame of soul as encouraged me to hope that the Lord would soon revive His cause in our midst for His own name's sake, notwithstanding the sins and provocation of our generation. There are twenty-seven years since I preached at Tain. What a wonder that the Lord spared me and gave me an opportunity of preaching there again. Many a billow has gone over my head during those years, and yet the Lord kept me alive. May I have grace to serve Him and redeem the time.

18th November, 1904.—Still comfortable in soul, but feel some tightness in my chest. Who knows but it may be the messenger of death? If so, the Lord has been very kind to me in giving me such tokens for good for the last two weeks to encourage me to believe that death will be a gain to me. I would wish to serve Him still longer on earth with my imperfect endeavours, but to be with Christ is far better. Whatever may happen, I feel happy when Christ is with me. He visited me in a most gracious and comfortable manner on this occasion, that I fear more what may meet me on this side Jordan than what is beyond the river. I would be sorry to leave His cause in such a low condition, but I have great hopes that He will revive it yet in Scotland, and that sooner than some expect. He did great things of old that even His own people looked not for. He did it “for His own name’s sake,” and His own name is as meritorious as ever. The shakings of all nations and the upheavings in Church and State in the kingdom may be the forerunner of the coming of Christ—“the desire of all nations”—spiritually to revive His Church and to make all the kingdoms of this world His own kingdoms. Let us not by unbelief limit the Holy One of Israel.

Tuesday, 22nd November, 1904.—Feel comfortable in soul, being enabled to trust in the Lord, and to realise something of His gracious presence with me. I have to preach on Thursday first, the Day of Thanksgiving for the harvest. I am thinking on texts for the occasion. When Christ is with me I can easily get texts: indeed the difficulty is to choose which to take. Christ is the sum and substance of the whole Bible—the Alpha and the Omega. But I must consider my hearers, as well as my-

self, and a minister should preach according to the needs of his hearers in the congregation. But Christ suits all, sinners and saints, and when He is so gracious to my soul I ought to proclaim His praise to others. His gracious visit may be intended for good to others also. "We beheld His glory." "My beloved is white and ruddy"—"The chiefest among ten thousand." Believers of old were thus declaring His praise to others, with the effect that they began to seek Him along with His Church. It cannot be vain to preach: some will be drawn to Him.

Thursday, 15th December, 1904.—Though not experiencing the happy enjoyment of Christ vouchsafed to me last month, yet I am enabled to exercise faith on Him as my Saviour. When happy experience is removed, the Word of the Lord abideth for ever. We are to walk by faith, not by sight. The cup of enjoyment cannot be expected to be always full and overflowing in this world. It flows and ebbs according to the Lord's sovereign will. "Stir not up my Beloved till He please." It is His sovereign will to come to visit His people in the time of need, and it is His sovereign will to leave them, though they should not drive Him away from them by sin. His absence draws forth the grace of faith in exercise. A true friend may be depended upon when he is absent as well as when he is present. "It is expedient for you that I go away"—though His presence is more comforting.

5th January, 1905.—I have lately been troubled somewhat with some in the congregation who manifest coolness to me for something I said on a Communion

occasion a few years ago in defence of Dr Kennedy, who was spoken ill of by a certain man in the south. The reason why I record this incident is to express my gratitude to the Lord for preparing me beforehand with wonderful comfort to enable me to bear the trial with a large measure of strength. Oh ! how kind the Lord is to me. He knew that I had to meet this trial, and He graciously fortified me beforehand to bear it patiently when it came. Without the comfort He gave me for a whole month beforehand I would be much cast down. Blessed be His holy name that He cares for me notwithstanding my unbelief ! I was thinking this morning before going to church that it would be a very pleasant thing to preach the Gospel if there were many in the congregation who felt themselves to be the chief of sinners. If you were in your experience the chief of sinners, you would feel yourself like the poor leper cast outside the camp, or like accursed Achan in the camp, fearing that the Lord's gracious presence would not be in our midst on your account. If there were such, many such in the congregation, it is then we might expect much of the Lord's presence with us. Oh ! seek to know yourselves as the chief of sinners. No blessing will come to you till you are brought to this.

Wednesday, 1st February, 1905.—I was at the Inverness Communion last week, and felt much bound in mind till Sabbath, so that I had a difficulty in getting a text to speak from. How dependent on the Lord I am. He gives me great liberty sometimes, and He leaves me in bondage other times. I am as the clay in the hands of the potter. I am reading Dr Alexander's book on *Demonic Possession*. It does not appear that the writer

believes that the Evangelists spoke by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. He is as far astray on the doctrine of inspiration as any of the so-called Higher Critics. It is very strange that the Free Church should have received him as a professor without first reading his book, which was published in 1902, especially as they must have heard that his book was not sound. Notice of it appeared in the Free Church Record of that year, but no fault was found with it.

Tuesday, 21st February, 1905.—Received a letter from my wife. She is afraid her sister* is not yet out of danger. This troubles me, but there is nothing too hard for the Lord. Her times are in His hands. Everything that the best medical skill could do has been done for her, but “unto God the Lord belongs the issues from death.” I have been pleading with Him on her behalf, and to Him alone I look for succour in this time of great need. He knows our trying circumstances, and, whatever be the issues of this trouble, “He is just in all His ways, and holy in all His works.” A sparrow shall not fall to the ground without His providence. Every letter or wire I get now from Glasgow I tremble to open it in case it may convey sad news, but as yet there is this door of hope, “Who knows?” As long as there is life there is hope, and, till I hear of her death, I shall hope for her recovery. “O Lord, undertake for us!” I received so much comfort from the Lord in the beginning of this winter that I anticipated some trouble, and it has come, whatever may be the issue. The Lord only knows. “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain thee,” is a Scripture that supports me. May the Lord

* Miss Marion Morrison.

raise her up from the gates of death to sing His praise in the gates of Zion. Flesh and blood shrink from suffering, and we should not ask for suffering, but when the Lord visits us with it we should seek that it might be blessed to us.

Monday, 13th March, 1905.—The War in the East* is still going on, and the Japanese are making great havoc on the Russians in Manchuria. It appears that the righteous Judge of all the earth is exacting vengeance on the Russians for their past cruelty to the Jews and many others of their fellow-creatures. The Russians do not, however, appear to realize this. They have not yet shown any signs of repentance. On the contrary, they justify themselves, and are determined to prosecute the war in the belief that God is with them. This is, alas! a delusion that is prevalent in this evil age in States and Churches. Though the judgment of God is heavy on Churches that have fallen away from “the faith once delivered to the saints,” yet they maintain confidently that they suffer in carrying out faithfully the will of God! Dr Rainy and his party publicly assert this. But it is a great delusion. The will of God is clearly revealed in the Scriptures, and when men act contrary to the Scriptures, as these men do, they sadly deceive themselves when they imagine that they act according to the will of God. So long as men are of this delusive opinion they cannot see the need of repentance. They shall go on in their dogged stubbornness, if God permit, till there is no room for repentance left. They shall see the error of their ways when it is too late.

* The war between Russia and Japan.

Tuesday, 14th March, 1905.—Read through the book written by Dr Robertson, Venice, entitled *The Roman Catholic Church in Italy*. The condition of the poor people of Italy, politically and ecclesiastically, up to 1870, when the Pope was deprived of his temporal power, was most deplorable. They were kept in ignorance: they could not read, and were dependent on what the priests would tell them of the superstitions of the religion of their Church, blind obedience to which they were compelled to render from slavish fear of the consequences of disobedience, such as seven penances and, in some cases, death. But 1870 was the year of their emancipation, temporarily and spiritually. The people of Italy were from that year free. They cast off the tyrannical yoke of the Pope as their temporal ruler and spiritual guide. Of thirty-three million of immortal souls in that once dark country, about twenty million do not enter the door of the Popish Church, and the remaining thirteen million, who go to that Church, go for personal devotions without the interference or mediation of the priests. In fact, the people despise the priests, and they would consider themselves disgraced if they were seen speaking to any of them. National schools and other educational institutions are now numerous, all under the control of the Government. No priest may be a teacher in these schools, and no Romish book will be allowed in them! The Word of God is circulated among the people and preached to them, and the good result is manifest. Many are enlightened, saved, and praise the Lord for turning them from darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto God! There is no country in Europe more free from the cruel yoke of the Church than Italy, not even Protestant Britain.

The Roman Catholic people of Italy have cast off the yoke of the Pope of Rome, and the Protestant people of Britain are taking on them his yoke! In all the Roman Catholic countries of Europe the Papacy is losing its power over the people. To bring Britain under his sway is now the aim of the Pope. To be master of Britain would mean, in his opinion, to be master of the whole world. In order to accomplish this end he uses policy rather than power. He begins his work covered in sheep's clothing to hide the wolf under that covering. In England there are thousands of Roman Catholics under the name of Protestants in the pulpits of the Protestant Church. There are many such also in Scotland and Ireland, especially in the Episcopal Church, and possibly in the United Free Church of Scotland. These teachers introduce popish doctrines and practices into the worship of the Protestant Church, first on a small scale, and then by degrees they set up all the ritual of the Romish Church. This is especially the case in England, and, having so many supporters in Parliament, some of whom bear the name Protestant, they become bold and try to change the creed of the Protestant Church of England to enable them under colour of law to set up the creed of their own Church instead. They began the work of Romanising the Church of England soon after the passing of the miserable Emancipation Act of 1829. All the members of the secret society of the Oxford movement were, as is well known, papists under the name of Protestants, among whom was the name of W. E. Gladstone in the list of members. That was the beginning of the evil work which has now come to such an alarming height. We were accustomed to hear of the Church of England spoken of under two

designations—the Low Church and the High Church. But this really meant the *Protestant* party and the *Roman Catholic* party in the same Church. At the present time the Roman Catholic party are called *Ritualists*. The Romanisers have now adopted new tactics for turning the Church of England into a full-grown papist Church. They propose that the controversy should be decided by an appeal to the Fathers during the first six centuries. They well know that by an appeal to the Word of God they cannot accomplish their evil purpose. Therefore they wish to appeal to the Fathers, many of whom erred from the faith once delivered to the saints. The work that does not stand the light of God's Word must be the work of darkness. "He that doeth evil cometh not to the light lest his deeds be reproved." Some of the Fathers were men of God, but of none of them can it be said that they spake by the inspiration of the Spirit of God. No additional revelation of God's purpose of salvation was given to the Church through them. They had God's Word, and in the measure in which they adhered to that reliable rule they were kept right, and in the measure in which they substituted their own carnal ideas for God's Word they erred from the faith. Now it is well known in history that although the Fathers who immediately succeeded the Apostles, and saw and heard them, kept in the main to the doctrines of the Word of God, the Fathers that came after these introduced into the Church some things that were unscriptural, and these corruptions were added to gradually till, in the sixth century, the apostasy from the faith came to a climax under the headship of the Pope.

Thursday, 23rd March, 1905.—Commented this evening on Psalm lxix. Long continued soul trouble led me to the subject. I have been very happy during the first part of winter, and enjoyed much of the Lord, if I know what it is to enjoy Him; but since the end of January I have been sinking in my soul more than I experienced for the last twenty years. I had a severe attack of influenza from the last week of January till the end of February, which brought down my system, and this may to some extent be the cause of my low state of mind. I have no accusation of conscience as to any actual transgression I committed this winter, though it is true that I sin daily in thought, word, and deed, owing to my imperfection, for which I would expect that the Lord would hide His face from me. But in my low state of soul my sins of youth come to my remembrance and harass me sorely. But I am not able to know whether it is God that brings them to my remembrance to humble me, or Satan, to drive me to despair. God only knows. Though it might be God that does it, Satan has a hand in it so far as he is permitted. When searching the Scriptures and preaching, I cannot conclude that God's anger as Judge is against me, though His fatherly chastisement may be laid upon me, for in that exercise I realise something of His favour, though not in the same measure in which I used to do. I got some relief to-night when commenting on the 69th Psalm. I never before took up this Psalm as a subject of discourse. My soul trouble led me to it. The sufferings of David and that of Christ which are set forth in this Psalm cannot be understood in a sympathetic or appreciative manner without some experience of their sufferings. For this end God permits, yea, brings His

people, and especially His ministering servants, into deep waters of soul trouble. As teachers of the Word, ministers require such experience so as to be useful to His Church, especially to those of His flock who are sometimes overwhelmed with a sense of sin, temptations of Satan, and manifold afflictions. “ Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not : behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence : He will come and save you ” (Isaiah xxxv. 3, 4).

Monday, 21th March, 1905.—Visited Jessie Russell* [Inverness], along with my wife and Mr Clunas. We conducted worship at the request of Jessie. In the course of conversation afterwards she told that, before she awoke in the morning she dreamed that I came in to see her, and that I read the 3rd chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians—the very chapter I read at worship in her house! This was very remarkable. When the Bible was handed to me to read, the Epistle to the Philippians came before my mind, and I hesitated for a short time as to whether I should read the first or the third chapter. I am very pleased that I went to see the good woman, and I feel the better of my visit. While in Inverness—lecturing on the Ark of the Covenant on Sabbath evening—I took occasion to testify against the conduct of a minister in that town who, according to a newspaper report, spent a long time in consecrating a new decorated window in the church bearing pictures, and among others that of Christ, on Sabbath, 25th

* This godly woman was one who, though denied her sight, was highly favoured of the Lord by the great nearness to her Lord which she enjoyed.

December, called by idolaters "Christmas Day." The minister professes to be a Protestant and a Presbyterian minister of the Established Church of Scotland. In this sad age there are many ministers in England and Scotland in the Protestant Churches who, for reasons known to themselves, profess to be Protestant, but who are really papists in heart and practice. I am not aware that any minister at Inverness or elsewhere protested against the idolatrous conduct of the minister referred to, and I considered it my duty to have raised my voice in protest against such glaring idolatry. I would not be satisfied if I did not do so.

Monday, 3rd April, 1905.—Preached three times yesterday. I am in better health, though not quite rid of the cold. Visited sick people in the afternoon. I have undergone severe soul trials this spring, after a long time of enjoyment and comfort, and I am not yet quite delivered from the ordeal. I believe Satan has a hand in my trouble, and, therefore, I try to resist him, and he flees from me for a time, yet he returns soon again to harass me. May the Lord rebuke him! The only intervals of relief I have is when I am searching in the Scriptures and meditating thereon, and when preaching. But no sooner am I done of this work than he is at me again, and if I listen to him for a moment he has me down under him again. I wish I could keep a deaf ear to him. But though I should now, after nigh fifty years' experience, know the most of his devices, I am foolish enough to listen to what he has to say against me, when according to the time I might say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." It seems, however, that the Lord permits the evil one to annoy me for wise ends. I seek,

therefore, to humble myself before the Lord, waiting for His time of deliverance. At my time of life I may be drinking the dregs in the bottom of the cup the Lord appointed for me, as Christ drank the bitterest drops in His own cup at the end of His state of humiliation. He endured the bitterest part of His sufferings shortly before He was glorified with that glory He had with the Father before the foundation of the world. I am thinking to preach first Sabbath, if it is the Lord's will, from John xviii. 11: "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" I have seen in the *Scotsman* to-day that the Pope's Legate was yesterday, I think, in Milan on his way to London, and that he celebrated mass there and prayed for the success of the Congress, according to the Pope's intentions that, as I presume, England would be brought under his yoke. I endeavour to pray that the Pope's intentions may not be realised, and believe that there are many others that join me in my prayers. The event will show which prayer shall be answered—the Legate's prayer or the prayer of God's people. If that of the former it will be a judgment to our nation, but if that of the latter, it will be a mercy to us, and a sign that the Gospel is to be continued in our land for some time yet, which it would not if the Pope's intentions were realised. In the event of the Pope getting his desire, idolatry, superstition, tyranny and murder would be the result, as has been the case when the Man of Sin bore rule in this kingdom. May God disappoint the intentions of the Pope! Amen.

Wednesday, 12th April, 1905. — Visited Jessie Forbes,* who is sick. Prayed with her, and felt my bonds somewhat loosed in the exercise. Those who were

* A noted Christian in the Dingwall congregation.

in church on Sabbath expressed that it was good for them to be there. I felt that an encouragement that the Lord has not forsaken me, for, if He did, the Lord's people could get no good from my endeavours in preaching the Gospel. When I get freedom in preaching, I find as a rule that some in the congregation get good to their souls. Whenever I endeavour to preach on the *Person* and the *atoning* work of Christ, I get liberty. This is an encouragement to preach often from some texts, though I have a delicacy in doing so to the same people. But this delicacy should be laid aside. We have nothing to meet the needs of lost sinners or saints unless we preach Christ in His finished work. There is no new Gospel—"That which was in the beginning, and that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you." There are new discoveries in philosophy and science, but there is no new Gospel for sinners. The Gospel preached to our first parents in the Garden of Eden is the same Gospel we have to preach now. We do not desire another. It is God's only provision for lost sinners. Any other Gospel is only an invention of erring men, and is ruinous to immortal souls. It cannot meet the needs of sinners or bring peace to their souls. God's Gospel is His power as a means to save. Man's invented Gospel is Satan's power to destroy.

Wednesday, 3rd May, 1905.—I have been away from home for the last two weeks assisting at Communions, and returned home yesterday. I was in Glasgow on the 4th Sabbath, and in Wick on the 5th. For some time before leaving home I was exceedingly harassed with temptations. I was much relieved in Glasgow and in Wick, especially on the Monday. I felt that my soul

was taken out of prison, Satan defeated and put to flight, and that I was made more than a conqueror through Him that loved me and gave Himself for me! Preaching at Wick from Song viii. 5, I felt the Lord very near me, and I was led to speak comfort to the Lord's people in a manner in which I did not feel for some time. I felt that the Lord's people present were sucking out of me many things that I did not think of before entering the pulpit. I learn more and more that the congregation, especially the Lord's people, have a hand in making a sermon and in helping a minister to preach. The minister is a channel through whom the Lord speaks to the people according to their several cases and needs. My temptations before going to the Communion were permitted, yea, ordained by the Lord, to prepare me to speak to the cases of others who were similarly tried. Although all the Lord's people have trials, ministers must go through more trials than others for the benefit of the Church.

Monday, 23rd June, 1905.—Preached yesterday from Exodus xii. 3—the Pascal Lamb. The subject was meant for the approaching Communion season. I felt a good deal bound up. I was not so happy as I had been on the previous Sabbath, and I feel to-day dead and much tempted, but by the evening feel in a happier frame of mind. Pressed down by a sense of my sinfulness, I was led to think of God's way of salvation by *grace*, and that those who obtained mercy would be unspeakably indebted to God for salvation. With these thoughts my heart began "to burn within me," like the two disciples when the risen Saviour talked with them; and at family worship I felt like a man taken out

of a dark prison and ordered by the King to walk at liberty and to enjoy the blessing with which Christ makes His people free. I wish to record this experience in praise of God's free and sovereign grace. All the redeemed will be indebted to God's grace, but I more than any. If I get to heaven, it will be with this cry in my mouth, "Grace, grace!" The longer I am in the wilderness the more I see that this must be my only plea. "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." This is a text that must be learned experimentally as well as intellectually more and more by God's people during their time in the world, and although they savingly know it at the commencement of their Christian course, yet they only then touched the hem of the garment. Before they are ripe for glory they shall, by acquiring deeper knowledge of themselves as sinners by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, be made to know more perfectly that it is by grace they are saved. They shall enter heaven bare naked of all that is their own, and be wholly clothed with grace. Grace came from heaven to bring them thither, and nothing can enter heaven but grace. Grace is the ground of salvation, and grace is the preparation for glory. The grace or love of God is the cause; the grace of the Spirit is the effect.

Monday, 31st July, 1905.—Preached yesterday from Joel ii. 12-14. I feel to-day my hope revived and my joy in the Lord renewed. When I do not enjoy the Lord, I feel like a man whose bones are out of joint, and who cannot walk and cannot enjoy even the good things of providence which God freely and abundantly gives. I find a gall in everything without the Lord. But when

He comes He takes the sting out of every trouble, and turns bitterness into sweetness, mourning into joy, bondage into liberty, hell into heaven, and I can repeat with understanding and happy experience the words of Christ: "If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

1st August, 1905.—Had a sweet visit from Christ yesterday, which made me truly rejoice. It may be a sign that He will come to the feast (Communion). Those who find Christ will hold Him and bring Him to their mother's house—the Church. Others who have not found Him yet may find Him there. Oh! may it be so! Then it would be a *Communion* season. The more communion with God the more unity among the brethren. The more love to God the more love to His people and the more love to fellow-creatures still in a state of sin and misery. Though God's people cannot love the unconverted with the same love as they love one another, yet they love them with a compassionate love. They seek their highest good. Little do poor sinners think of this. But it is really the case.

8th August, 1905.—The Communion services are now over. It was a happy and profitable time all through. There were many of the Lord's people present from all parts of the Highlands, and they seemed to be happy on the mount. The only element of discontent was on the part of one man who was not called to speak to "the question" on Friday. He was very angry for passing him over, and complained to me after the meeting in an angry tone, which made it clear that selfish pride was uppermost, and greatly offended. This is not a good

sign. In Mr Archibald Cook's time he called on a godly man to pray at a prayer meeting. The man was refusing to pray, and Mr Cook said at last: "Rise man, for there are some present that would give me *half-a-crown* for asking them to pray." How much we need the grace of humility.

2nd November, 1905.—Preached at Beaully to-day. There were some of the Lord's people present who, I believe, were the means of helping me to preach. In the course of the sermon I referred to the trouble that some of our young ministers cause in our Church in agitating for union with the Free Church, and said that this was permitted by the Head of the Church to throw out of our communion those who were not faithful, and that the Lord was sifting and purifying the Church. The decrease in the salaries of ministers for the last two years is, I believe, permitted as a trial to prove who are faithful and who are not. A certain man said to Christ, "I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest," but when Christ said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head," we hear no more about that man as a follower of the Saviour. There are many such worldly-minded men in this generation. They will not follow Christ for His own sake, but for the loaves and the fishes. The Church is much better without such.

6th November, 1905.—Did not feel so happy yesterday (Sabbath) as last week. Trials prepare His people for comfort, and make room in their souls for comfort. When Christ sends comfort He comes with it Himself—"I will come to you." This makes the comfort a

double blessing. Comfort without Christ is no real comfort. He Himself is the "all in all." Jacob refused to be comforted by the rest of the family when Benjamin was taken from him. So does the soul when Christ is taken from him. The Psalmist complained that his soul was among the lions—spiritual lions; so I have been, but Christ came and rescued me from them. "O my soul, be stirred up to bless His holy name!" He said: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." As to their experience, He sometimes leaves them for wise ends; but with respect to the *union* between them, He never leaves them. He comes at last to take them to be with Himself where He is. Then the happy experience will be as lasting as the union. He shall then be always before their eyes, and they, without a moment's intermission, behold His glory.

17th November, 1905.—My mind is still clear and aspiring towards Jesus. To be spiritually minded is life and peace. To have grace in *being* is to have a well of water within us; to have grace in *exercise* is to have that well springing up unto eternal life. The former is an evidence of the new creation without the evidence to which one has a right; the latter affords the evidence along with the comfort. When Jesus comes by His Spirit, He moves the well and the water flows forth. It springs up towards Himself first, then to the Father through the Son, and then to His people and the Lord's cause to the ends of the earth. It extends to the whole family in heaven and on earth. It salutes and embraces them all with a holy kiss.

8th November, 1905.—Find the Lord still near me, causing me “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” I visited some of my people to-day and prayed with them. Jesus was present. Oh! that He would continue with me—“He is the health of my countenance and my God.”

9th November, 1905.—“Looking unto Jesus.” Read and made some remarks on Ephesians iii.—a wonderful chapter written in prison. I said that Paul enjoyed perhaps as much of Christ’s presence in prison on this occasion as he did during his course on earth, except when he was lifted up to the third heaven. Having sweet fellowship with Jesus he cannot be silent. He must—there is a gracious necessity laid upon him—declare His praise to the Church. The prisoner of Jesus Christ is the man that enjoys true liberty. His body was shut up in prison, but his *soul* was at large with Christ. Men could imprison his body, but could *not* imprison his soul. The more suffering the Lord’s people endure for righteousness sake the more they enjoy of Christ. Christ can turn a prison into a Bethel—the house of God.

30th December, 1905.—My endeavours to prepare for the Sabbath (to-morrow) consisted in reading of Scripture, prayer, and fasting. I read the 51st Psalm, sang part of it, and read Daniel ix. and the following chapters to the end of the book, and Isaiah xl. 31 came before my mind with some degree of light and hope. I was meditating on other passages of Scripture during the week, but that text seemed suitable to the exercise in which I was engaged during the day. I need the

teaching of the Holy Spirit. He leads into the truth, and brings to remembrance the words which Christ had spoken. I feel my soul murdered by the enemy when I am not able to preach Christ. To Christ I flee, that He may hide me when I am pursued by the great murderer of souls. May the Lord rebuke Satan and enable me to preach the Gospel! When my mind is turned towards Christ I am able to resist the devil and he flees from me. He cannot stand in the presence of Him who bruised his head. He is afraid of Him. Let me, therefore, preach Christ and allow the Evil One to howl as he likes.

Monday, 1st January, 1906.—At family worship to-night the Lord made up for me my want of enjoyment at the public service* to-day. I felt cast down in soul after preaching, so much so that I wished I had not preached at all. But now I feel relieved and happy! The Lord is sovereign in giving and withholding. It is right to be in the path of duty. The command of God is the rule of duty, not my feelings, though one cannot go through his duty with comfort without enjoying the Lord. I have now what may be called “a happy New Year.” Many have to-day wished each other, “A Happy New Year,” without knowing what a happy New Year is. There is no happiness without God, the only fountain of true happiness. Without His favour and enjoyment there can be no true happiness. Many labour hard to dig happiness out of the earth, though that broken cistern has declared times without number to millions of the human race with a loud voice—“Happiness is not to be found in me.” It is the Gospel

* New Year's Day service.

alone that tells where true happiness is to be found. For my part, I seek and find my happiness in God, and the fact that He grants me to enjoy Him is an evidence to me that He has reconciled me to Himself through Jesus Christ, and that He has graciously forgiven me all my sins. Who can then lay anything to my charge? Who can condemn me? None can; for it is God that justifieth me, it is Christ that died for me to pay my heavy debt, that rose again as an evidence of the Father's satisfaction with the finished work of my glorious Surety, that sits at the right hand of the Father as my Head, making sure to me that He will bring me, a most unworthy member of His mystical body, in due time to be with Himself where He is, that ever lives as my Advocate to plead my cause against all adversaries, and to ask and receive and to communicate to me all the grace that I have not received, and all the glory that awaits me when I am ripe for it! Is this too much to expect? Is it presumption to look for it? Looking to myself, to my own desert, it is by far more than I could expect; but looking to the love of the Father, the merit of Christ, the undertaking of the Holy Spirit, and the declaration of the Gospel, it is not too much to look for by the chief of sinners that believe in Jesus.

2nd January, 1906.—Though conscious of the sinfulness of my nature, I had moments of sweetness in the Lord to-day. I could not refrain from singing aloud in my study, Psalm cxviii. 17-19. I could sing this song from experience of past distress and present joyful deliverance. There is not a condition in which the Lord's people are in but there is something in the Book of Psalms to suit them. That book is intended for the

use of the Church of God as a book of praise in both dispensations—Old and New. Those who do not find their experience in that book have reason to doubt that they are the people of God. The teaching of the Spirit in the soul must agree with His teaching in the Word. He is the Author of both. But those who are not taught of the Spirit, uninspired hymns will suit them better. Hence the desire for such hymns in our day. A counterfeit religion will take up with counterfeit praise. But to return. Let me remember the Lord's lovingkindness to me in giving me both a cause and a heart to sing His praise. "Thou hast loosed my bonds." Not, however, for the first time, but it is a new deliverance, and I sing the "new song" anew! Every deliverance calls for a renewal of the "new song."

Monday, 22nd January, 1905.—Preached yesterday from 2 Cor. viii. 9. It was on the whole a good day to me. Speaking from the text, I felt solemnised at the thought of the Lord of glory, the Creator of heaven and earth, becoming *poor*! It was by His poverty He merited riches for poor sinners who lost their all by sin and the fall. When the Lord enables me to preach Christ I then get some crumbs of the bread of life for my own soul, and so am the means of ministering the same to other needy souls. I have suffered much this winter under a famine, not because there was not enough and to spare in the Father's house, but because Satan would not allow me to partake of it. The Evil One was not, however, permitted to starve me to death, for Christ gave me a diet now and then to keep me alive. When preaching last Sabbath I gave out a view of Christ's atonement which gave myself much comfort in

meditating on the subject in my study, viz., that though I believed in a limited atonement, that is, that it is limited to the elect, yet there is a sense in which it is unlimited. It is unlimited in its efficacy towards the elect themselves. No bounds can be set to infinity. It is a treasure that cannot be exhausted, or even diminished, however much is drawn out of its fulness. His blood cleanseth from all sin. It meriteth life eternal, grace and glory. The believer can plead it against Satan, sin, unbelief, and all enemies that rise to deprive him of his hope.

Wednesday, 31st January, 1906.—Returned from the Inverness Communion yesterday. I got there renewed tokens of being in a state of grace, and of having Christ's commission in my endeavour to preach the Gospel. When preaching on Monday from Romans v. 1 the Lord did shine upon me, and opened my mouth to declare the Gospel of His grace in such a manner as that I had no shadow of doubt but I was preaching the only way of salvation, not only with my understanding, but also with heart experience. I was needing the relief the Lord graciously vouchsafed to me, for before going to Inverness I had been brought low and kept in a turmoil by the assaults of Satan. In this severe conflict my hope for eternity was not, however, overthrown. I was confident of my interest in Christ, and that if no relief came before death, it would come then. But it pleased the Lord to grant me deliverance before that event! This encourages me to begin anew to make mention of His righteousness and of His only. "I shall not die, but live and declare the works of God."

Thursday, 22nd February, 1906.—I expect going to Inverness to-morrow to preach there on Sabbath. I seek to set the Lord before me. May His gracious presence go with me, and may He enable me to preach the Gospel to myself and the people there. There is nothing that can do good to perishing sinners but the provision revealed in the Gospel. There is in that provision all that the sinner needs. It is all our salvation and it should be all our desire.

Friday, 23rd March, 1906.—The Sabbath is drawing near. Not yet fixed on texts, though I have been thinking on some. May the Lord direct me. The state of His cause burdens me; and were it not that my own congregation are steadfast and needing the Gospel, I would be disposed to speak of the dangers that threaten the cause of God in our land. I leave myself on the Lord for guidance. May He teach me, that I may teach others. “O send forth Thy light and Thy truth; let them be guides to me!” There are many texts, but, O! Lord, what I need is Thyself to enable me to preach. Thou hast promised—“Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” I will go on in the strength of the Lord.

26th May, 1906.—Had a favourable time yesterday when preaching. But to-day I feel that I am not yet perfect. The light and liberty the Lord granted me last Sabbath have, however, lifted me up from the dungeon in which Satan has kept me so long during the winter with his temptations. The enemy hath pursued my soul. He hath smitten my life down to the ground. He hath made me dwell in darkness as those that have been

long dead (Psalm cxliii. 3). In this sad condition the Evil One deprived me of my *comfort*, but not of my *hope*. From the remembrance of the many evidences the Lord has given me of my interest in Christ, Satan was not permitted to touch my faith in its root. I felt confident that, should my trouble continue to the end of my life, death would put an end to my misery. This kept my head above the waters of affliction, so that my faith failed not. The danger of the Lord's people from Satan is when he comes to speak by his temptations. He does not trouble me in the way of inciting me to commit sin knowingly and willingly, but he tries another method. He does his utmost in various ways to discourage my heart and weaken my hands in my endeavour to serve the Lord. He assails me with his "fiery darts," which search me but fail to kill me. Every wound he inflicts Christ heals by the balm of His blood, and this saves my life from the destroyer.

I am in these days drinking a somewhat bitter cup given me instrumentally by some of my small congregation, but in the highest sense I view it as given me by my heavenly Father. In this view of it I ought to say with my glorious Surety, "Not My will but Thine be done." Hitherto we have worked as a harmonious congregation, but Satan has been permitted to come in to create discord. I do not know what shall be the issue of the strife, but I commit my case to the Lord, who can say to the storm as of old, "Storm, be still!" and a great calm may follow. He knows that it is my desire and endeavour to follow Him in the Gospel of His dear Son, and He can, if it be His holy will, say, "Thus far, Satan, shalt thou come, and no further." The Lord gave me a token yesterday (Sabbath) when I was preach-

ing on the captives that He was not angry with me. This strengthens me in my present trouble. "If God be for me, who can be against me?" May the Lord rebuke thee, Satan, and avenge thee by saving even one sinner on this Communion occasion. That would be another token for good. It would cause sorrow to the Evil One, and joy among angels in heaven and His people on earth. "Fear not, thou worm Jacob." Therefore. O! my soul, "Fret not thyself because of evil doers" (Psalm xxxvii. 1). "They shall soon be cut down," but those that wait on the Lord, they shall inherit the earth, yea, and heaven also.

Monday, 21st January, 1907.—I expect going to Inverness for the Communion this week. The Lord knows my great need of mercy and grace for His holy service. I am on many accounts among the chief of sinners, and if I obtained mercy, then it is as less than the least of all saints. But the provision of the covenant of grace suits me, and were it not for that provision I could not have any hope. To despair in view of God's provision whereby He is glorified would be to rob Him of the glory that redounds to Him in saving the very chief of sinners. I will not, therefore, add to my guilt in depriving Him of that glory. I heartily close with His way of salvation. Then, "Get thee behind me, Satan." I shall go forward in the strength of the Lord and His righteousness, and His only. I feel strengthened by my meditation on free grace. Thanks be to the Lord!

Tuesday, 29th January, 1907.—Returned from Inverness Communion. Was much tempted and tossed all these days, but felt upheld by the Lord when preach-

ing. Our own Communion begins (*D. I.*) this week. I pray that the Lord may be with us. On coming home I felt relieved from the turmoil in which Satan kept my mind while away. May the Lord continue His goodness to us during the solemn season, and may grace and peace be multiplied to us all.

1st March, 1907.—Read to-night part of the *Memoir of Elizabeth West*, and found encouragement from its perusal. Though dead she yet speaks. The Lord's people may by their writings be useful to others after their death. They should, therefore, leave a testimony in writing behind them. Lord, as I have done so little for Thee in preaching, enable me to write as much as I can for Thy glory and for the good of Thy people and others yet unborn. I have written some, but would have written more were it not that I have been so much crushed by Satan and unbelief. Enable me then to be up and doing on Thy side in speaking and writing, that what I come short in the former may be made up in the latter, though both need the blood of sprinkling.

Tuesday, 5th March, 1907.—Visited to-day an old Christian woman—Mrs Mackenzie, Dochnaclair, Fodderty—who is dying. Though suffering, she looks happy, and spoke a good deal. She mentioned that it was under the preaching of Dr Kennedy, from Rev. iii. 20, she was first moved to concern about her soul.

8th March, 1907.—Had a letter to-day from a friend in Uist giving an account of the last illness of my late brother, Alexander, who died on the 9th of January last. He is of the opinion that my brother died in a state

of salvation. Alexander led a careless life till seven or eight years of his end in this world. During that latter period he was totally blind. In this state the Lord was pleased to open the eyes of his soul to see his need of Christ to save him. The friend who wrote me visited him often, and says: "I was pleased to observe that his mind was much changed. Every time I visited him he would at once begin to speak about the truth. And one would understand from the way he spoke that he took a very great interest in these matters. There was a great change in Alexander."

Tuesday, 19th March, 1907.—Feel in a praying spirit in these days, and find access to the enjoyment of God through Christ. I have been much bowed down in my soul this winter. My prayers had been groans which could not be uttered by reason of oppression, rather than words to make known my requests. But the Lord understands the language of *groans* as well as that of words, and He makes this known to me by answering my prayers which I could not express in words! I now spend more time in private prayer in the morning than I had done for some time, and I feel freer and happier during the day. This is a lesson to me to seek the Lord early. "They that seek Me early shall find Me." This applies to seeking Him in the morning of the natural day as well as in the morning of life—in youth. If one gets a good breakfast he may be well off all day. This holds spiritually. Although the Lord is sovereign in giving or withholding the spirit of prayer, that does not relieve us from our duty of prayer. His time for giving the blessing may not come, but our time for waiting on Him is always ready. "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their

strength.' One should read much but pray more. By prayer the reading is watered and made profitable. In reading the Word of God, He speaks to us; in prayer we speak to Him. There is thus a mutual intercourse kept up by reading and prayer.

27th March, 1907.—William Fraser, elder, died last night. He was 78 years of age. His widow, who is still living, is in her 90th year. William was a good man and a sincere Free Presbyterian. I visited him yesterday evening for the last time before his death. He seemed to be suffering much from shortness of breath, and he was breathing heavily. He may not, however, have been conscious of his suffering, as he did not appear to observe that I was beside him. His struggles with the last enemy—death—gave me a visible lesson of what it is even for a Christian to die. After coming home I was imagining myself in his position struggling with death, and thought that as I was a spectator of a fellow-creature dying, others would soon see me in the same solemn position. Another lesson it taught me was the importance of being prepared for death before the sufferings of death begin. The time of death is not the time to seek salvation. The dying one may not be then capable of thinking or conscious of what may be said about the things that belong to his eternal peace. It is, therefore, most dangerous to postpone the important matter of salvation till the hour of death! But for the true Christian it does not affect his state for eternity what state his mind or body is in at that hour, whether he is conscious or unconscious. He is in Christ, and whether alive or dead he is safe. Yea, for him death is gain.

3rd April, 1907.—To-day we have fixed on a site for a new church at a meeting of the Building Committee held in the Manse. The meeting was hearty in the matter, and we pray that it will be a place for the conversion of sinners and the edification of the Lord's people.

5th April, 1907.—Found out to-day that there was a person at the prayer meeting last night whose case needed what I said about David's afflictions. This confirms my impression that the Spirit of the Lord directed me to the subject of discourse.

30th May, 1907.—Spoke at the prayer meeting this evening from 1 Peter ii. 3. Was beforehand favoured with tasting that the Lord is gracious. I have been at a low ebb in my soul since I returned from the south. My bodily health was down, and this may have had to do with my low frame of mind. The turn of mind came in a wonderful way. I dreamed last night or early this morning that I was conducting worship in some house, I cannot say where, and when asking a blessing on the portion of Scripture to be read, my mind went forth in prayer on the Father's provision of salvation in Christ, and I said that it was God the Father that made Christ for us "wisdom, righteousness, and redemption." I felt great sweetness in my soul when repeating these words, and I awoke with that sweetness in my soul, which continued in some measure all day. I might say, "My sleep was sweet to me." I do not attach much importance to dreams in general, but I believe from experience that the Lord reveals Himself by means of His own Word of truth to His people in time of need when they are asleep. It was the taste I got in my sleep of the

Lord's graciousness that led me to speak on the subject at the prayer meeting this evening. Two of the Lord's people have come to live in Dingwall, and one of them is in the Manse to-night, and I was in a better mind meeting them than I had been for some time past. Perhaps they were praying for me. Nothing can comfort a poor soul that feels deserted but the Lord speaking through His own Word. That is a sufficient antidote for every soul trouble. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that He may set him with the princes, even with the princes of His people" (Psalm cxiii. 7, 8). I seek to bless the Lord for His great mercy to me! Although my state for eternity would be secure, yet I cannot be happy without the enjoyment of the Lord. Indeed I would be a useless man on earth without it, and would suspect my state as justified; for the enjoyment of God is an evidence of justification, and wanting that evidence would be quite enough to make me doubt my state—that is, if I never enjoyed Him. Remembering past enjoyments supports me in darkness, but, in order to remember it with comfort, we require to get a new taste. That will dispel present doubt, and will enable one to say with Thomas: "My Lord and my God." There are times, however, when faith is unshaken without the enjoyment of God, as when Job said: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." But he felt miserable without the enjoyment of his God. This caused him to cry out: "O! that I knew where I might find Him." His happiness consisted in that enjoyment, but his state was safe without it for a time. Ministers are God's mouth to speak to their flock according to their several needs. They receive of the Lord that which they are to deliver to others.

They receive first a taste for themselves, and then they say to others: "O! taste and see that God is good."

1st December, 1907.—In preaching from Isaiah xl. 31, in Gaelic, on Sabbath last, I got some reviving, which encourages me to wait on the Lord, especially in *private*, for a revival of His work in our midst as a congregation. I have often got a revival of the spirit of prayer at this season of the year. In 1856 I began to pray as a *sinner*. For many years since my ordination in 1876 the Lord gave me a kind of a spiritual anniversary at this season, and I was favoured with this gracious visitation more since 1893, the year in which we made a stand in defence of the truth of the Gospel, which I take as an evidence of the Holy One's approval of the step we have taken. It was not "a leap in the dark," but a leap out of that darkness introduced into the Church by unfaithful ministers and other men, into the light of the Gospel, which we endeavoured through grace to retain in our land. I was needing much of a revival of soul at this time, as I have experienced great darkness in private devotions for some time, though I often in public service enjoyed much comfort and enlargement in preaching the Gospel. A revival of the spirit of prayer in *private* is the first token of a more general revival of the other graces of the Spirit. True godliness begins in *secret* and develops itself outwardly in public profession—"Behold, he prayeth." Whereas the religion that will not stand begins in *public profession*. The rich crop of corn the farmer reaps in harvest springs from the seed sown under the clod. The full corn in the ear is not the origin of the crop, but the *seed* sown under the ground. So it is with true godliness. It begins in private when no eye

sees it but the eye of the Omniscient. Every revival of the renewed soul begins in *private*. So it is also in the revival of the Church in general. The revival of Pentecost began in private in the "upper room" in Jerusalem. Thence it spread abroad. Then let me wait on the Lord in private for the outpouring of His blessed Spirit upon myself, my household, and my congregation, yea, upon the whole world. Lord, give us some revival in our bondage. We need it as individuals, as families, as a congregation, and as a generation. I feel concerned about all these. A new method of making progress in religion has been discovered by some in this age. But it is progress in the wrong way. To illustrate this let us say that a man started from Dingwall to go to Edinburgh, and on reaching Perth he changed trains and entered one going north to Wick. When he reached Inverness he shouted on the platform: "See what progress I have made!" On being asked where he was going, he answered, "To Edinburgh." When he was told that he was much farther from Edinburgh than he was at Perth he would not believe it. This is the way with the men of progress in this age, they will not believe that they are wrong.

Thursday, 12th December, 1907.—A report of what I said on the Harvest Thanksgiving Day and on Sabbath last, on the unscriptural mode of worship in most churches in this backsliding age, appeared to-day in the local press. I anticipate a volume of abuse for what I said, but as I did my duty in testifying against such rubbish in the name of God's worship, I hope the Lord whom I serve will defend me. I cast myself upon Him. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a

crown of life.''' I found out after the meeting to-night that I was led to speak a word in season to some in the meeting. I was prepared beforehand in a mysterious manner to speak as I did. For the last few days Satan was harassing me terribly with some of my old sins which I had good reason to believe the Lord had forgiven me long ago. But the Evil One was coming day and night with a burden of these on his black back to take away my hope. This crushed my spirit, but I was fleeing to the blood of Jesus, and he had to flee away, for He cannot stand the argument of the blood by which his head was bruised. I was put in a condition to speak from the heart to other hearts. If we would speak to poor sinners for their benefit we must be great sinners in our experience ourselves. I felt greatly relieved myself when speaking, and some others got relief too! Ministers are instruments in the hand of God, and He uses them according to His own good will. He permits Satan to harass them with temptations in order to prepare them as with a sharpening stone for His work. If the tempter knew that he was by his temptations preparing God's servants to destroy his own kingdom he would not be so busy tormenting them. Some called Satan "the great fool." If you saw a man trying to break in pieces a large rock by striking his head against it, you would say to that man, "You are a big fool; you are only hurting yourself." So it is with Satan: in everything he does to destroy the kingdom of Christ, he only works for the destruction of his own kingdom. His agents are as foolish as himself. They are exceedingly laborious in their devices and efforts to overthrow the kingdom of Christ, and are, in all they do, working out their own everlasting ruin.

The people of Dingwall, who now make so much ado about getting Dr Kennedy's portrait as a relic in their possession, but who have forsaken his principles and faithful teaching, are like the Scribes and Pharisees of whom the Saviour speaks as garnishing the tombs of the prophets whose teaching they discarded. To follow his faith and to consider the end of his conversation would be a more becoming way of remembering him who had so long the rule over them and who had so faithfully spoken to them the Word of God (Hebrews xiii. 7). But this the great majority of his great congregation have not done. They forsook his faith, and now they are jealous to grasp his shadow. But the day is coming when Dr Kennedy shall appear before them in *person* and not in *picture*, to bear testimony against them for not taking to heart the many faithful warnings he gave them concerning the apostacy that he foresaw was to take place in Dingwall and in other parts of Scotland. There shall be no competition then as to who will have his picture. The very sight of his face as a swift witness will awaken in the hearts of all who disobeyed the Gospel from his lips the desire for a hiding place to flee from his presence. They can bear the sight of his *picture* now, but they will not be able to bear the sight of his *person* then. Some are bold enough to affirm that Dr Kennedy, if he were living, would do as they did! Let them not cast a slur upon the memory of the faithful man of God. He left behind him in writing many evidences that prove the contrary. He was not a man to be shaken by every wind of doctrine. He was faithful unto death. And it is vain for men that forsook the faith to make a prop of him in order to support them in their error. They are like the **Jews** who called Abraham their father while

they forsook his faith. Some confess Christ as long as they have not to lose their worldly goods, but when it comes to this they deny Him. There were instances of this in 1843 and in 1893. These have visible marks of Christ denying them even in this world. They were like Saul, the king, when the Spirit of the Lord left him. He was left to his own inventions, and consulted a witch. So they also have recourse to their own inventions in doctrine and worship.

11th February, 1908.—I am in these days suffering from the epidemic of cold that is going round. I preached three times on Sabbath, though not feeling well. Returning home from church, I was seized with a severe attack of giddiness that laid me prostrate in the street. Though quite conscious and feeling no pain, I thought I was dying. I preached with some comfort and energy in the evening, and felt strong enough coming out of the church, and did not in the least anticipate such an attack. But we know not how near or how sudden we may be ushered into the world of spirits. Had it been the time of my departure, I was helpless in the hands of God, whatever He was pleased to do with me. I wonder at myself that I did not feel terrified at the prospect of sudden death, nor did I feel a desire to die. Though somewhat happy in church, I was for the moment blank as to the misery of going to the place of everlasting woe or to going to heaven. I think I have learned by that experience that the state of the believer is not affected by his state of feeling at death. It would be a comfort to be in a happy frame of mind when dying, to have the light of God's countenance going through the dark valley of the shadow of death, but if that is

denied, it will be made up at the other end of the valley. Christ experienced the hiding of His Father's face when He was nearest the full effulgence of it. It may be so with His members also.

12th March, 1908.—I find that when I am preaching or reading Satan does not annoy me so much by his darts. The door is then shut against him. My mind is then occupied with more glorious things than to listen to him. I like, even on that account, to be often engaged in these exercises. It is a good thing to have a breathing time from his cruel assaults. If I would be the means of destroying Satan's kingdom in any measure, I would wish to live for years yet in the world in the midst of fiery trials. The Lord will, I hope, give me the victory at last over the devil, the world, and the flesh. "Our life is a warfare," but the victory will be on the side of Christ and His people. The shout of victory is not yet mine to proclaim. Let me fight the good fight of faith to the end in the strength of the Lord and the shout will come at the end. Though I am suffering in mind and body, I do not complain of anything but sin—the only evil. Everything is good but sin. I have now come to this, that I dare not complain of any trouble of mind or body but *sin*, in its guilt, dominion, and depravity, in my nature. This is my one desire, to be conformed to the image of the Son of God. This is the end of God's eternal purpose of salvation next to His own glory—which must have the pre-eminence.

11th August, 1908.—I am thinking of the many new churches that are being erected in connection with the United Free Church in the Highlands. Ministers are going about to collect money for that purpose. If they

were to apply to me for a contribution towards that object, I would refuse on the well founded ground that I had "difficulties and scruples"* in giving to aid a Church that changed its creed in order to admit men into office who had "difficulties and scruples" in binding themselves to the Westminster Confession of Faith, which is founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto. A Church that has done this has drifted away from the Word of God, and is not worthy of being helped in any way. "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is a partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10, 11). It is a sin to help a bad cause, and no one will give to help that Church without incurring guilt. This may be reckoned a hard saying, but on examining the matter according to the unerring rule of Scripture it will be found to be true. As long as the Free Church adhered to the Word of God as the rule of faith and practice, God supplied her abundantly with financial support, but when she forsook that rule He withdrew it and gave a large share of it away in judgment, to be swallowed up in litigation. And yet this token of divine displeasure did not open the eyes of the backsliders to see the error of their ways. They still go on in their error, and proclaim on the housetops that they are doing the will and work of the Lord.

19th August, 1908.—It is reported in the public prints that a Roman Catholic Congress is to be held in London early next month, and that delegates to the

* The reference is to the phrase in the preamble of the Declaratory Act, which gives this as a reason for changing the creed of the Church in 1892.

number of 6000 are expected from all parts of the world to that meeting. Over 100 Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, and Abbots are to be present. The object of this enormous gathering of Papists is, we have no doubt, to convert Great Britain to Popery, first by the use of policy, and, secondly, force, if they gain supremacy. We, as a nation, deserve to be chastised by just punishment because of our sins, and nothing but national repentance will prevent it. Popery in this evil age is making its last struggle before its final downfall, like a dying man when about to breathe his last breath. At that moment he gathers all his remaining strength, but in the effort to retain life he becomes a corpse. So it shall be with Popery, according to the predictions of the Word of God. In view of this threatened judgment our only help is in our God. Let us humble ourselves for our sins and the sins of the nation, and pray to the Lord that He would bring the counsel of His enemies to nought, and cause the forthcoming Popish Congress to return from London sadly disappointed in their plot to extinguish the light of the Gospel in our much privileged land. Lord, plead the cause that is Thine own: let not the enemy prevail against Thy people and cause. We have no strength in ourselves against this great army, but Thou art Almighty, and Thou canst easily put them to flight. Thou hast promised that no weapon can prevail against Thy Church. Fulfil this promise in this time of need, that we may glorify Thy name.

In my sermon I referred to the Roman Catholic Congress to be held in London, and showed the danger to which our country is exposed. Many in my congregation did not know anything about the Congress, and desired me to write in the public press about it and give

a warning cry. Ministers should be watchmen to tell the people from the pulpit the dangers that threaten them and the cause of Christ in the land. If they do not so, the blood of souls will be required of them at death. Many ministers who are mere hirelings never give warning to their people, but cry "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. Prayer to God is the only weapon in the time of trouble. I urged upon the Lord's people the duty of prayer that the Lord would lift up a banner against this enemy that comes to our land like a flood, and mentioned as an encouragement how the prayers of our Church were answered when Lord Salisbury and others made an effort to change the Coronation Oath of our King in order that a Papist might come to the throne. We appointed a day of humiliation and prayer on that occasion, and on the night of that day Lord Salisbury said in Parliament that he could not go on with the bill to change the Oath! This was an answer to prayer. But at the forthcoming Congress the subject is to be taken up again, so there is need for another day of humiliation and prayer. If there is mercy in store for our kingdom the Lord will bring to nought this plot as He did centuries ago in the case of the Spanish Armada. "Arise, O! Lord, and plead the cause that is Thine own" against the enemies of Thy glory. Lord, restrain and conquer all Thine and our enemies.

10th September, 1908.—Read to-day in the *Scotsman* a report of the Popish Congress held in London yesterday. The Papal Legate read a letter from the Pope, in which his Holiness (?) expressed pleasure that the Mass, which was the centre of Christian worship, was to be celebrated in the Metropolis. The letter concludes with

the apostolic benediction. The blessing of the Pope has often been turned to a curse. The Legate was clothed in *crimson*, as Scripture describes or designates the bloody, persecuting Romish Church, and addressed the Congress. He said with pleasure that for many centuries England for the first time opened its doors to a Papal Legate. He offered his thanks to the King and to the nation for their hospitality. The Pope, he said, expected great results from their meeting, and hoped that the celebration of the Eucharist would unite all in the kingdom in one faith; that the Congress would forge a link that would bind the present day with the past—that is, with the Dark Ages. This is the intention of the Pope—"the reunion of Christendom." In other words, to convert Christianity to anti-Christianity. May God forbid that this should take place! I shall watch its proceedings. In its programme there will be a proposal to change the Coronation Oath so that a Papist may be entitled to sit on the throne. For this purpose the Mass is to be celebrated with all the solemnity and splendour that Jesuits can devise in order to impress ignorant people with the impropriety of describing it in the Coronation Oath as *idolatrous* and *superstitious*. If their project or plot succeeds, there are days of bloody persecution before us. May sleeping Protestants be awakened, and true Christians quickened.

[Mr Macfarlane and his congregation at Dingwall held a day of humiliation and supplication at this time, and on September the 14th, 1908, he writes:—]

The Popish Congress has been disappointed in its intention of carrying and exhibiting the Romish wafer-god through the streets of London on Sabbath. Such

an exhibition was illegal and was prohibited by the Government. The Lord be praised ! The Popish Legate complained of the injustice done. This is like a law-breaker who intends to break the law of the country and is stopped from carrying on his intention while he is to engage in breaking the law. Would it be accepted as an excuse if that criminal said : “ You should have told me sooner that I should not be allowed to break the law. You have done me an injustice ” ? But the Lord who reigns sent them back confounded and disappointed. Their wafer god fell before the living and true God, as Dagon of the Philistines fell before the Ark of the Lord. An ice-cream merchant in the town who kept his shop open on the Sabbath, which was a snare to young people, died last week in a fearful state. The man was, it is said, an Italian and a Roman Catholic. He refused to shut his shop on Sabbath, but the Lord of the Sabbath removed him to eternity, and the shop is now shut on Sabbath and week days ! This is a solemn warning to Sabbath-breakers. If they will not listen to His command, “ Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” He will take another way of dealing with them. He will protect the sanctity of the Sabbath by removing Sabbath-breakers from the world, as for the same sin He removed Israel from the land of Canaan and gave them over to captivity. Time will show what effect the Lord’s work of judgment in the present case shall have on Sabbath-breakers in Dingwall. “ Vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord.” “ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Take warning, Sabbath-breaker : “ Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” From this Scripture we may infer that those Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with

their sacrifice, and the eighteen men upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and killed them, perished eternally (Luke xiii. 1-4). For Jesus said, "Ye shall all *likewise* perish"—that is, in the event of their not repenting.

18th September, 1908.—Returned home from Stratherrick after officiating at the Communion there. The occasion was a happy one. The Lord was liberal to us at the services, especially on the Sabbath and Monday. I had to preach that day, and although I felt tired going to church, and did not know what text to take, as soon as I entered the pulpit Song viii. 5 was suggested to me, and I took the text. I preached from it before, but when speaking I found it as fresh and comforting as if I had never spoken from it, and I was told that it was so to the Lord's people present. When the Lord is present an old text becomes new. The Word of the Lord is an evergreen which never fades. The fading is in us, not in the Word. I seek to bless the Lord for His goodness to me at Stratherrick. The blessing I enjoyed there is still fresh on my soul. The promise, "Lo, I am with you alway to the end of the word" stands sure.

Monday, 26th October, 1908.—Was favoured with tokens for good when preaching from Isaiah ix. 6, 7, yesterday. I got very little sleep on Saturday night—had a restless night—but I was wrestling in spirit with the Lord for a token for good, and I have to acknowledge to the praise of His grace that He answered my prayer. I felt strong and happy afterwards, and I could say, "I love the Lord because He heard my prayer."

Monday, 4th January, 1909.—Last Sabbath being the first Sabbath of the year, I preached from Romans

vi. 13, and I may say that I received such comfort as if Christ said, ‘‘ A happy New Year to you.’’ I felt this especially when I was speaking on ‘‘ The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.’’ Eternal death is the wages that is due to us for our service of sin, but eternal life is the gift which we did not deserve. But it is given to us justly because Christ merited it. This is a wonderful exchange ! It is the Gospel of the grace of God. Every sin deserves the wrath and curse of God, both in this life and that which is to come. The Papists deny this, hence their distinction of *venial* and *mortal* sins. They seem to found this on what the Apostle John says in the 5th chapter of his 1st Epistle, verse 16. The Apostle there does not say the sin of the brother spoken of does not *deserve* death, but that it is not *unto* death, because the believer shall not die eternally for his sin since Christ died for him. There is, therefore, no scriptural ground for this distinction, and that the wicked must be punished with eternal death proves that there is no sin that is not mortal—*i.e.*, that there is no sin that does not deserve death. It is for want of understanding of the Scriptures error comes into the Church. The Daystar arises inwardly in the heart of believers before they pass from time to eternity to give them light going through the valley of the shadow of death and to dispel their doubts and fears, and to enable them to say in the full assurance of faith, ‘‘ We are going to heaven to be forever with the Lord.’’ To die is a solemn thing even for the Lord’s people. It is dreaded by many, sometimes by some to whom death is gain. I am a weak creature myself, often harassed by unbelief, but I would not dread to enter eternity this moment. But I wait the Lord’s time.

COVENANT DRAWN UP BY MR MACFARLANE IN 1904.

Nehemiah ix. 10.

WE have in this chapter an account of a covenant made by the Jews after their return from Babylon. The day on which they entered this covenant was a day of feasting, confession of sin, reading and expounding the Scriptures, and prayer. They called to remembrance God's goodness to them and their fathers in the past, their own disobedience to God, and they bound themselves to reform and obey the commandments of their Lord and God. Nehemiah was the first to sign the covenant, then the priests, the Levites, and the heads of families. They were all newly delivered by the Lord. They were long in captivity, and they appreciated their liberty, and it was in all the circumstances of the case a most suitable occasion to enter into such a covenant.

As it is the duty of a people for whom the Lord had done great things, and on whom He has bestowed great privileges to enter into covenant with Him or to renew their covenant with Him, it is also the duty of individuals to do so.

I, therefore, in dependence on His Spirit and grace beginning another year of my life, which God has given me, will renew my covenant with Him in the following manner and terms:—O Lord, enable me by Thy grace to begin and finish this important work.

I. *Confession of Sin.*—O Most Holy One, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, I seek with shame and confusion of face to confess my sins before Thee. I came into the world bearing the guilt of Adam's first transgression, devoid of the original righteousness in which Thou didst create man, with my nature wholly corrupted in me. I was born a guilty and condemned sinner, deserving eternal death, the wages of sin. I added to this the sinfulness of my nature, actual transgressions, more in number than the hairs of my head. I lived for many years ignorant of Thee as the God who created me and whom I ought to serve and glorify. I also confess my sins since Thou didst call me by Thy Spirit out of a state of nature and my sins and shortcomings for the last thirty years as a minister, twenty-eight of which I have been an ordained minister.

II. *Prayer.*—O gracious and merciful God, who art the Saviour of sinners of mankind, I pray Thee to forgive all my sins, original and actual, my sins of omission and commission, all my sins before my conversion, and all my sins since that time. Blot them all out as a thick cloud for the sake of Jesus Christ, Who satisfied the justice of the law by the one sacrifice of Himself on behalf of all His sinful and guilty people whom Thou hast given Him in the everlasting covenant of grace. His atoning sacrifice is my, but all-sufficient, plea before Thy righteous tribunal. I disclaim any merit in anything I have done or suffered through a law ordeal, either before or after my conversion, as the ground, in whole or part, of forgiveness. I make mention of the righteousness of Christ and His only as the ground on which I plead my hope for forgiveness

and for all my salvation, even the finished work, the work of which Thou has testified thine acceptance as a full ransom for the sins of thy people by raising Him from the dead and exalting Him on Thy right hand in heaven.

III. *Thanksgiving.*—O Lord, Thou art good and Thou doest good to the sinful and undeserving of the least of Thy mercies. I seek to acknowledge Thy goodness to me in the past. I thank Thee for ordaining and appointing my lot in a Gospel land. I might have been born and brought up in a heathen land where there is no true revelation of Thee, the God of salvation. The Bible was in the house in which I was born. I praise Thee also for Thy goodness and longsuffering towards me during the years of my ignorance in a state of nature, which was a state of sin and misery. Thine everlasting love, on which there is no break from everlasting to everlasting, surrounded me as a wall of fire to protect me from being cut down by death before my conversion. For this, with innumerable benefits bestowed on me while I was ignorant of Thee, I seek to praise Thy glorious name. I thank and praise Thee especially for the effectual and saving work of the Spirit in me, convincing me of my sins, enlightening my mind in the knowledge of Christ, and enabling me by faith to receive Him as my Saviour as He is freely offered in the Gospel. Of this work I was totally ignorant till Thou in Thy sovereign grace and in Thine own appointed time taught me I could not work it of myself. I am wholly indebted to Thee for it. I praise and magnify Thee for Thine unspeakable mercy to me! I thank and praise Thee also for the many evidences Thou hast given me, in private and in public, of my

interest in Christ and in the blessing of His purchase at the cost of His humiliation unto death. Though I had many doubts and fears on this subject, and sometimes still have, yet Thou didst not leave me long under the power of unbelief: Thou didst in the time of need, again and again, shine upon my soul by Thy Spirit through the Word of Truth to enable me to see and read my title to the glorious inheritance: "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." I have been sometimes so much favoured in this respect that I could find no words to express my wonder and gratitude except in the language of the Apostle: "What shall we say to these things?" I praise Thee for calling me to serve Thee in the Gospel and putting me in the office of the ministry, a work which I had no thought of, nor desire for, till Thou didst call me effectually by Thy Spirit, but which is now my meat and drink, my choicest work on earth. I magnify Thy great Name also that Thou hast made me faithful to preach the Word and to defend it against the attacks of avowed foes and professed friends in a backsliding age. This I could not do but through Thine own grace freely bestowed on me. I take no praise to myself. I ascribe all the glory to Thee. I thank Thee for upholding me in my calling in the face of all opposition from enemies, and even from some of Thy own people whom Thou didst chastise in various ways for their evil speaking of me. Thou didst thus take my part, who am weak and helpless in myself, to vindicate me against their un-Christian attacks. I kept silent, but Thou didst speak for the dumb, and Thou didst lay Thy hand heavily on them in Thy providence that they might not be condemned with the wicked in eternity.

IV. *Humiliation.*—I seek to humble myself and to lie low in the dust before Thee, the High and the Holy One of Israel, Who inhabitest eternity and dwellest in the light to which no creature can come. Remembering the years in which I lived in forgetfulness of Thee and in neglect of the great end of my being and the sins of that period of my life, though I was kept by Thy restraining grace from open transgression except Sabbath-breaking, I feel ashamed before Thee, and though Thou didst forgive these sins, I cannot forgive myself for them. Looking back on what is past of my life as a public professor of Thy thrice holy and adorable Name, I see many reasons for humbling myself for my sins and imperfections, though these were evils “I would not.” In spite of my resolutions and endeavours to be made holy as Thou art holy, I found to my grief that evil was present with me and that sin was mingled with my best endeavours to do Thy will. In Thy holy service, as a minister, though Thou didst often give me to say from happy experience: “A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand,” yet a sense of my shortcomings in all my poor service caused me frequently to mourn and to humble myself before Thee. But all this discovery of my imperfections had the effect of shutting me up entirely to Thy gracious provision of salvation in Christ and not to trust in anything I have ever done or expect to do, even though done by grace, as the ground of my salvation. By grace I am saved, and not by works of the law in whole or in part, not even by the works of the Gospel so far as these are duties which I am bound to do and enabled by grace to perform. All my works are at least imperfect. Christ’s work is perfect, and on His work I cast myself

as a sinner and as a believer. He is the foundation laid in Zion. I am only as stone laid on that foundation. It is not the small stone that supports the foundation, but the foundation the stone. O Most Gracious One, ever blessed be Thy Name, that though I have so many reasons to be humbled in Thy holy presence, there is no reason why I should despair. Thy provision of salvation for poor sinners is all-sufficient and suitable to meet the otherwise desperate conditions.

V. *Self-dedication to and renewal of my covenant with God.*—I, in this solemn but dutiful work, being obliged to it by consideration of Thy many mercies to me in the past, I dare not, yea, I will not, transact with Thee, a righteous Father, apart from the one Mediator between God and man, the Lord Jesus Christ, and His atoning sacrifice. I make a covenant with Thee by His sacrifice. He is the way of access to Thee, the truth and the life. No man cometh to Thee but by Him Who is the only way, the only way for sinners and saints. In this and in all my transactions with Thee I need Thy Son Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast graciously provided for sinful men to draw near unto Thee. By Thy grace enabling me and helping me I dedicate myself to Thee to live unto Thee and to serve Thee in the Gospel of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ the time Thou mayest be pleased to spare me yet in the world. I am Thine in person and service. Use me in promoting Thy glory and in advancing Thy cause and kingdom in this backsliding and provoking age. If it is Thy will make me useful to feed the flock and to lead sinners to Thee by Jesus Christ. Make me more faithful in my endeavours to declare Thy whole counsel as that counsel

is contained in the Bible, Thine own inspired Word. For this end grant me Thy Holy Spirit that I may grow in grace and that He may open my understanding to understand the Scriptures and enable me to divide the Word of Truth aright, giving every hearer his due portion. I renew my covenant with Thee, and in doing so I resolve, by Thy grace enabling me, to endeavour to live a holy life, hating iniquity, and loving and practising righteousness, to preach the Word, Law and Gospel, with all possible faithfulness; to continue to testify against all false doctrine, sinful practices, as I endeavoured to do since my ordination, and even since my conversion. I cast myself on Thee in Christ, a merciful God, on Thy grace and providence. Leave me not nor forsake me. Thou knowest that I love Thee, that I am in sympathy with Thy people and cause, that I feel greatly concerned about Thy Church, and that I would rejoice to see Thy Kingdom coming more than anything else in the world. Give me grace to speak in Thy Name that sinners may be converted unto Thee, and that Thy own poor tempest tossed people may be comforted and edified through unworthy me, and that I may be enabled to keep this covenant and perform my vows. Amen.—DONALD MACFARLANE, Free Presbyterian Manse, Dingwall.

13th January, 1904.

THE DECLARATORY ACT IN COURT.

A DISAGREEMENT arose between two parties concerning important matters in the Christian religion. The name of one was D.A.,* a mere stripling, and self-conceited, as the young in years are naturally prone to be. The name of the other was C.F.,* an old party of long experience, of mature judgment, and highly respected by experienced and well-grounded followers in the doctrines and practices of the faith as clearly set forth in the Word of God. They were both professing to adhere to the standards and practices of the Free Church of Scotland, but disagreed on important points concerning the Faith. The case of contention between them was repeatedly tried in the Courts of the Church, and at length decided in favour of the younger party—like the case of Rehoboam (2 Chron. x.), who followed the advice of the young instead of the old men, and brought judgments on the nation. The young party had many followers in a back-sliding age, but the old party protested and appealed to a higher court—the Court of Heaven—to finally decide the case; as there was no higher court to appeal to.

God was the Judge, speaking through His Word, and it was the standard by which the case was tried and finally settled. The court-house was filled with anxious listeners, among whom were many ministers and office-

* That is, Declaratory Act. C.F. and D.A. are intended to represent defenders of the Confession of Faith and the Declaratory Act respectively. The above lecture was delivered by Mr Macfarlane at Kishorn.

bearers, who were self-confident that the case would be settled in favour of D.A., as it had been in the lower courts. But the case was not to be settled or decided this time by majorities, but by the Judge who is just in all His ways and holy in all His works. He would decide the case impartially in favour of the one who had the truth on his side.

Each party employed an advocate. The name of the advocate employed by the old party was Mr Faithful, and the name of the advocate for the young party was Mr Novelty. There were no witnesses cited by either party, and the pleading was left in the hands of the advocates. The old party were the pursuers, and charged D.A. with imputing to them what they considered to be a slander on their Confession of Faith. Each party wrote a document, in which their views of Scripture were expressed. The document which C.F. published was called the Confession of Faith, and the document which the young party wrote and published was called the Declaratory Act. Both these documents were produced in court.

The court having been duly constituted, the case went to proof. There were several items to be discussed, and Mr Faithful, representing the old party, asked that D.A. be put in the witness-box. The first item discussed was the Preamble of the Declaratory Act. The Judge solemnly having administered the oath which demanded that the witness should speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, Mr Faithful, the advocate, then commenced a most searching questioning of the witness, as follows:—

Mr Faithful—Why was the Declaratory Act made?
D.A. answered that it was to remove difficulties and

scruples which had been felt by some in reference to the declaration of belief required from persons before being licensed and admitted into the ministry of the Church. Mr Faithful then asked what was the nature of the difficulties and scruples these men had—were they about the truth of the Bible as clearly set forth in the Confession of Faith—yea or nay, he demanded—remember, you are on your oath? D.A. answered, the Act is according to the Confession of Faith. Mr Faithful—That is one of the points which C.F. complains of as amounting to a slander on his character. I have the Confession of Faith here, and I see nothing in it which should cause any difficulty or scruple in taking office in the Church. What have you to say to that? D.A.—I have to say this: As we are men of progress we are not to be bound in this 20th Century by a creed that is hundreds of years old. As a principle of our Church, said Mr Faithful, the Bible is much older than that, and are you to throw it overboard because of its old age? D.A.—There are many things in the Bible that we do not believe. Mr Faithful—Where did you learn to doubt the Bible? D.A.—I learned it in Germany when I was studying for the ministry of the Church. I did not consider myself quite qualified without taking a course of studies in that country, and when I came back to Scotland and took office in the Church as a minister, I began to point out to my hearers the things in the Bible that were not true. Mr Faithful—What are these? D.A.—The first is about the love of God. Mr Faithful—What is your view about that love? D.A.—My view is that God loved every individual of the human race without any exception. Mr Faithful—The Bible does not say that; but it says that God loved some of the human race, who

are in it called “the elect.” D.A.—We do not believe in the doctrine of election. Mr Faithful—Whether you believe it or not, that doctrine is plainly taught in the Bible and in the Confession of Faith, which is founded on Scripture and agreeable thereto.

The next point taken up was the extent of Christ’s Atonement, which is stated in the Declaratory Act, as follows:—“That this Church most earnestly proclaims as standing in the forefront of the revelation of grace—the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit to sinners of mankind manifested specially in the gift of His Son to offer Himself as a propitiation for sin.” Mr Faithful—Do you mean by sin—the sin or sins of every individual of the human race, or the sin or sins of all that be saved? D.A.—I mean the sins of every individual of the human race. Mr Faithful—Do you admit that many of the human race are lost and punished in eternity? D.A.—Yes. Mr Faithful—Then you impute injustice to God. Sin is called in Scripture, a debt, and if Christ rendered full satisfaction to justice by His atonement for every individual, you impute to God that He exacts payment twice for the same debt? even an honest man will not demand payment twice, and if it is offered to him a second time, he will take it as an affront, and will say—“No, you think that I am a dishonest man?” and if an honest man acts that way, the just God will not demand payment twice for the same debt. He is fully and for ever satisfied with the payment that Christ made. Further, the work you ascribe to the Holy Spirit in applying the work of redemption is a mere striving with man, whereas the Bible standard by which you are tried teaches that there is more than a mere striving of the Spirit—that He works effectually in all that are saved.

There is a common operation of the Spirit with many under the Gospel that are lost, but as already stated, there is an effectual work in the case of those that are saved.

You also state in your document that my client does not regard the Confession as teaching the fore-ordination of men to death irrespective of their own sin. Do you mean by their own sin—their own actual transgression or the guilt of Adam's first transgression, which is imputed to every individual of the human race for which he stood as covenant head?

D.A.—As I am on my oath, I must say that it is their own actual transgression I mean. Mr Faithful—Then you must be a Pelagian, for Pelagians deny that Adam's posterity are involved in his first transgression, and so you teach contrary to the Confession of Faith, and, therefore, I do not wonder that my client considers your charge against him as a slander on his character.

You further state in your document that you do not consider the Confession of Faith to hold that any dying in infancy are lost. The Confession of Faith speaks guardedly on that point. It says that elect infants are saved, and if all infants have been elected to salvation, then none of them are lost. But, if only some infants have been elected, the rest must be lost. I suspect that from your view of election and the universal extent of Christ's atonement, together with your Pelagian view of the non-imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin to his posterity, you are trifling with serious truths and ascribing to my client's document statements which are not in it, but what suits your own fancy and that of your deluded followers. The Bible teaches that every individual of the human race for whom Adam stood in

covenant comes into this world guilty in his state and wholly depraved in his nature. It is, therefore, evident that you have adopted your view without carefully studying either the Bible or the Confession of Faith, and thus made a "Bible" in your own heart, which is naturally full of error; hence I charge you with slander-
ing my client.

Mr Faithful—You also state that the Confession of Faith is not to be held as teaching that God may not extend His mercy for Christ's sake and by His Holy Spirit to those who are beyond the reach of the means—that is, the Gospel described already as the ordinary means of salvation. Do you mean by those beyond the ordinary means of grace the heathen who never heard or read the Gospel? D.A.—Yes. Mr Faithful—The Confession of Faith teaches that the light of nature is not sufficient to lead men to salvation—that the Word of the Gospel is necessary for that purpose, and that those who have sinned without the law shall perish without law (Roms. ii. 12). The Apostle Paul, in the same Epistle (x. 14) says:—"How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?" and he concludes on this point by saying that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. He thus clearly shows that none can be saved without the word of the Gospel. Not a single instance can be shown from history of the heathen being saved without the word of the Gospel. Missionaries going for the first time among the heathen with the Gospel never found one individual of them knowing the way of salvation by Christ. They were

still worshipping their idols, but when the Gospel came and was blessed to them, they turned from their idols to serve the living God (Thess. i. 9). By your view you are misrepresenting both the truths of the Bible and the statements of my client, and slandering him by saying that he is of the same view as yourself regarding the salvation of the heathen.

Further, in section two you state that in holding and teaching according to the Confession of Faith the corruption of man's whole nature as fallen, you maintain that there remain tokens of man's greatness as created in the image of God. That he possesses a knowledge of God and of duty—that he is responsible for compliance with the Moral Law and with the Gospel, and that although unable without the aid of the Holy Spirit to return to God, he is yet capable of affections and actions which in themselves are virtuous and praiseworthy. Your statement regarding the corruption of man's whole nature is according to the Confession of Faith, but you withdraw that statement when you say that man in a state of nature has knowledge of God and of his duty, for his whole nature is corrupt, then ignorance of God is part of that corruption, and yet you say that a man in a state of nature has knowledge of God and his duty. Do you mean by the knowledge of God, the innate knowledge of Him which every individual of the human race must have on account of his having a moral nature and a conscience, or do you mean a saving knowledge of Him given by the teaching of the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures? D.A.—I mean the former knowledge, as I believe the heathen may be saved without the Word of God, for they believe in the existence of a God to whom they are responsible. Mr Faithful—The Bible and the

Confession of Faith teach that man in a state of nature is not only dark as to his knowledge, but that he is darkness itself (Eph. v. 8), and as to his knowledge of his duty, he calls evil good and good evil. With regard to his greatness, he is in his fallen condition morally lower than the irrational creatures, for “the ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master’s crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider” (Isa. i. 3). The Germans, in the War, manifested how low man has fallen by their cruelty and other evil deeds. They reckoned might to be right, and that because they have forsaken the truths of the Bible. Therefore, instead of your views being in accordance with the Confession of Faith, they are quite the contrary.

Further, in the 3rd clause of your document you state that this Church disclaims intolerant or persecuting principles, and does not consider her office-bearers in subscribing the Confession of Faith committed to any principles inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment. What do you mean by liberty of conscience? D.A.—I mean that every one should act according to his conscience. Mr Faithful—Conscience is not the rule of action, but the Word of God. The young men referred to in the preamble of the Act who refused to take office in the Church under the Confession of Faith, thought or think, I suppose, that they are acting conscientiously when they have scruples of conscience in taking office under that Scriptural standard. Some office-bearers of your view have signed the Confession of Faith. If so, they are traitors and enemies to the cause of truth, for the truth says:—“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands

and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity nor sworn deceitfully" (Psalm xxiv. 3, 4). Evidently they did so in view of the Declaratory Act being passed, an Act that is quite contrary to the truth and the Confession of Faith founded on the Scriptures. Then you speak of private judgment. What do you mean by private judgment? D.A.—I mean that every one should interpret Scripture according to his own judgment, and not be tied to a creed centuries old. Mr Faithful—Then, instead of a common creed in a Church, there would be innumerable creeds, as everyone would be left to his own judgment. The Confession of Faith was framed to be a common standard of faith and practice for the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, and no person had any scruples in taking office under it until upstarts like yourself, who forsook the truth of God, arose in the Church to suit their own selfish vanity.

Mr Faithful—You further state in section IV. of your Act that while diversity of opinion is recognised in this Church on such points in the Confession of Faith as do not enter into the substance of the Reformed Faith therein set forth, the Church retains full authority to determine in any case which may arise what points fall within this description, and thus to guard against any abuse of this liberty to the detriment of sound doctrine or to the injury of her unity and peace. Mr Faithful—What are the points in the Confession of Faith about which there is a diversity of opinion recognised? D.A.—There are minor points, such as the Civil Magistrate's relation to the Church; the Sabbath and other points. Mr Faithful—I see in your document that they are not minor points about which you say there is a diversity of opinion, but very important points—such as the love of

God, the extent of Christ's atonement, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the salvation of the heathen, etc. These are very important doctrines, and do seriously assail the verity of the Reformed Faith. How, then, can you call them minor points? I suppose, and it is evident you try, to reduce to the minimum what you are to believe. You thus make the Church like the Pope, and when these points come before the Assembly, they are decided by an autocratic majority and not by the inerrant Word of God, which is the only rule given to direct us in faith and practice. So far as the civil magistrate is concerned, his relation to the Church is more than being a member. He is, according to the Scriptures, a nursing father to the Church, and in his capacity he is bound by the Word of God to give of the revenue of the kingdom for the support of Christ's cause. Then the Sabbath is commanded to be kept holy in the service of God privately and publicly, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy. The effect of your Church's view of keeping the Sabbath holy is seen in the fact that your ministers, office-bearers, and members take unlimited licence in desecrating that holy day, while those that fear God and reverence His law love the Sabbath and endeavour to keep it holy. The saying is true, "A Sabbath well spent brings a week of content," but by your document you give liberty to discount the holy law of God, and act in defiance of the divine will. You say that you do this for the unity and peace of the Church, whereas it clearly opens a door for all the evils and indifference that abound—for want of holiness, purity, and holy living—as is evident in this day by so many empty churches in the land where the Gospel flourished while men adhered to the infallible Word of God.

This finished the examination of Mr D. A., and Mr C.F. was called into the witness-box. Of course he also was put under oath, and was questioned by Mr Novelty as follows:—Mr Novelty—Was it you who wrote and published the book called the Confession of Faith? C.F.—No! but several of the noted divines of England and Scotland. Mr Novelty—Do you think that a creed that is centuries old, although it might suit the Church at that period, will suit the Church of the 20th century, when men have made such an advance in learning and criticism of the Bible, and thus require an Act as my client published to explain the Bible and your document according to their own light? C.F. answered that the truth was never old or out of date, and instead of the Declaratory Act explaining my document, it explains it away, and it is not just of your client to say repeatedly that the contents of his Act are in accordance therewith. It rather contradicts it, and the advance in learning that you assume is not an advance, but a going back to heresies that the Church of the Reformation in the 16th century and since then would not tolerate. Mr Novelty—What have you against my Act in particular? C.F.—My advocate representing me told you already what I have against it, but I may add that it is full of errors. It is a bad sign on any Act, and that is true of yours, that there is no passage of Scripture advanced in support of it from the beginning to the end, whereas in my document there is a passage or passages of Scripture in it to confirm every statement, and your omission of adducing Scripture proofs for yours, reminds me of the saying of Christ—“ He that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved ” (John iii. 20). Thus your document is the work of

darkness, and the truth says that if the blind lead the blind they both fall into the ditch. Neither I nor my followers fear the light of Scripture, for our motive is to the law and the testimony, but those who do not speak according to the truth show that there is no light in them (Isa. viii. 20), except light from sparks of their own kindling (Isa. i. 11). Mr Novelty—You are narrow-minded and bigoted, and you think that there are no good people in any Church but your own. C.F.—I am as narrow and as broad as the Word of God. I am so narrow that I will not receive any error into my Church, and so broad as to receive the whole Word of God without any exception, and my followers are so discerning that they will know the difference between truth and error, and will have no fellowship with scoffers, who walk after their own lusts (2 Peter iii. 3), even such as are “lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God! having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Tim. iii. 3-7), and your followers are described as such as “will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Tim. iv. 3, 4).

Regarding my opinion of good people following your creed, I never said that there was none such, but if there are such individuals they keep to the Bible testimony and not to your document. As a whole, your followers preach error from your pulpits, some of them hold erroneous views of the creation of man, and say that

man came from the irrational creatures. This is in opposition to the account given by the inspired writer of the Book of Genesis. These ought to have another church of irrational creatures, such as apes, instead of reasonable creatures, and when any of them call a meeting of session they should say in giving intimation that there would be a meeting of the descendants of apes on such and such a date.

Mr Novelty—But you must remember that science has made great discoveries, and among others found out this matter. C.F.—All true science agrees with the Bible account given of the creation of man, and wherever science contradicts the Word of God it is false, as the day will declare. Mr Novelty—Do you not admit that there is a development in everything? C.F.—It has never been proved that any living creature developed into a different species. According to Scripture, every animal produces after its kind. A sheep will produce a sheep, a horse a horse, and a cow a cow, and so man after his kind : this is true also in the vegetable kingdom, every species after its kind. Mr Novelty—You are too ready to quote Scripture, and make no allowance for men's opinions. C.F.—The opinion that is not founded upon Scripture leads to many errors besides those now under examination. Mr Novelty—But our followers recognise a diversity of opinion on all subjects that do not enter into the substance of the Reformed Faith. C.F.—But surely the creation of man enters into the substance of the Reformed Faith. We are bound to believe everything God reveals in His Word. Mr Novelty—I consider my followers to be learned men ; but I must admit that we cannot follow you in your producing such Scripture evidence. C.F.—You remind me of

an anecdote about two ministers that met for the first time. One of them was an evolutionist, one of your followers. He did not know to what Church the other minister belonged, and he began discussing the evolution of man from protoplasm. The other minister was a follower of mine, and argued against his opponent by proving from Scripture that man was created according to the account given in the Word of God. He quoted many passages of Scripture to prove his case, till at length the evolutionist said, "You must be a Free Presbyterian."

This concluded Mr Novelty's examination of C.F. The judge then asked C.F. if he had anything more to say. C.F.—I have to say this, that D.A. grossly misrepresented me in the charges he brought against me in his document, and has seriously deviated from the truth, cast a slur on my character, even slandered me before the whole world; and it was this that made me appeal to your court, where I believe the Judge, who is a just Judge and holy in all His ways, will vindicate my character and clear me of all unjust aspersions. but will by no means clear the guilty.

The huge audience were now anxiously waiting to hear what the Judge had to say in summing up the case. The Judge, in beginning, said:—The glory of my truth is involved in this case, and also the salvation of perishing sinners. The revelation I gave of myself as the God of salvation is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments, and to cast doubt upon that revelation is, as one of my Apostles said, "He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar" (1 John v. 10), and D.A., by his document, is guilty of this charge. All the doctrines in his Act are opposed to the Bible,

which is my Word, and to the Confession of Faith, which is clearly founded on that Word, and agreeable thereto. It is not therefore true, as D.A. says, that he spoke according to that standard of doctrine, but instead is teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. In the preamble of his Act it is stated that this new creed was framed to remove difficulties and scruples of men, who would not take office under the Confession of Faith, but these men run without being sent by me. "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran" (Jer. xxiii. 21). These men preach to please those who will not endure sound doctrine: but not to maintain my Word and testimony. But my sheep hear my voice and are careful to follow such as will declare my whole counsel as revealed in my Word, and they know not nor acknowledge the voice of strangers. "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed. For he that biddeth him God-speed is a partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 9-11). This Declaratory Act, which is cunningly framed, is a device of Satan to draw people away from my Truth, and to entrap them in his own net, so as to make sure of their everlasting destruction from my presence. Souls should be on the watch lest they enter into temptation, and such as do not willingly retain the truth I will send upon them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they might all be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thess. ii 11, 12). I approve of every statement

in C.F.'s document, as all statements therein are supported by my Word of truth, and I, as Judge of all, through my Word, condemn D.A., and acquit C.F. from the charge brought against him by his accuser; but as I am a long-suffering God and delight in mercy, while judgment is my strange work, I will give D.A.'s followers an opportunity of renouncing their errors and of returning to sound doctrine, but if not, their blood shall be on their own head.

The Judge, in addressing D.A., asked him what he was to do. D.A. refused to retract any of his statements, holding that, according to his opinion, he did not forsake the truth. The Judge—Do you think yourself wiser than I? If so, you must bear the consequences of your disobedience and also all your followers.

There was great commotion over the decision of the Judge. Those who adhered to C.F. protested against the arrogant manner in which D.A. tried to compel all to accept his views, and by their protest and determined adherence to C.F. made a faithful stand according to the grace given to them for the original standards of faith and practice held by the fathers in 1843, their eyes looking unto the hills from whence cometh their help, even to Him who made heaven and earth, trusting that He would sustain them in providence, as well as in grace—yea, looking unto Him who saith—"Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. ii. 10).

There was, sad to relate, many waverers who, evidently for fear of worldly maintenance, were at first strong opponents of the D.A., but when the hour of trial came, proved to be unsteadfast and perfidious (Psalm lxxviii. 37), but those who remained faithful had no

reason to regret the step they had taken, but on the contrary have reason to praise the Lord for His goodness to them spiritually and temporally. He owned and blessed their labours, and, although they began their work without a penny of funds, yet the Lord was providing for them year to year according to their need, so that as their ministers began to increase in numbers, their funds increased correspondingly. If the seed of truth is to be kept, it does not follow that it is in a large Church, but it may be in a small one. The farmer does not require a large barn to keep the seed he is to sow ; a small corner is sufficient.

There are proposals for Union, but it is the wisdom as well as the duty of Free Presbyterians to stand in defence of truth and principle in the hour of trial. Those who feel disposed to unite with a larger Church, let them walk over to that Church at once, and the Church they leave shall lose nothing by their departure. The proposal for Union is not a matter of principle but of expediency. It is like the woman who expected some friends to visit her, and who tried to sweep her house as clean as possible, but it was only because of the expected visit. We believe that a large union will yet take place, when the Spirit is poured down from on high, but that time has not yet come.

When Zion by the mighty Lord
Built up again shall be,
In glory then and majesty
To men appear shall He.

SERMONS.

I.

PRAYER FOR GOD'S PRESENCE.

“ My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”—
Exodus xxxiii. 14.

THE children of Israel were now encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai. Moses was on the top of the mount receiving the law from the mouth of the Lord. During his absence the people committed a great sin, by which they provoked the Lord to anger, so that He refused His presence with them during the rest of the way to the land of Canaan. But at the special intercession of Moses, and on the people repenting of their sin, the Lord promises that His presence shall go with them: “ My presence shall go with thee.”

The promise must be considered in connection with the circumstances in which it was given, which are set forth in detail in the context. We shall therefore have to consider four particulars, viz.:—

- I. The sin of the people ;
- II. Their repentance ;
- III. The ground on which they received the promise ;
and
- IV. The promise itself.

I. The sin of the people. The particular sin of which they were guilty on this occasion was the sin of idolatry. They made a false god in the shape of a golden calf, and worshipped that idol. This was "a great sin." Every sin is against the great God, and is a violation of His holy law; but of all other sins that of idolatry is more directly against Him, and more dishonouring to Him. It is a breach of the first commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." It strikes at the being and attributes of the one living and true God, and seeks to rob Him of the glory, honour, and worship due to Him alone as the Creator, Law-Giver, and Redeemer of men. Except the unpardonable sin this was the greatest that could have been committed. And it did not in the least palliate their sin that they thought they would worship the true God by means of the image they had made, for that was a violation of the second commandment, which forbids the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in His Word. All who worship God by images are idolaters as sure as the heathen who worship the gods which their own hands have formed. The people set up a false god, and they did not stop there. One false step leads to another. They also adopted a false creed, they began to preach false doctrine: "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (chap. xxxii. 4). Having changed their God, they would require, in order to be consistent, to change their doctrine. And we see that their new doctrine is as false as their new god. It was not true that it was that dead idol that delivered them from the bondage of Egypt. It was the living God, whom they had so soon forsaken and forgotten, that delivered them. He reminds them of

this: "I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (chap. xx. 2). Why is it that so many in our day have changed their creed? Is it not because they have, like Israel, changed their God? It is not at all the God of the Bible that is preached and worshipped by many in this generation, but a god of their own imagination, an image set up in place of the living God. Hence the change in doctrine.

The occasion on which this departure was made was when Moses was up on the mount with God. It is when God's faithful witnesses are taken home to heaven the Enemy takes the opportunity of corrupting the Church, and of turning men from the truth. It was during Paul's absence the false teachers introduced the "other gospel," which was "no gospel," into the Church in Galatia, which caused many to be removed from Him that called them. When Moses was in the congregation he was a check against idolatry, however much inclined some of them might have been to that sin; but when he was away the restraint was removed, and the people sinned. One reason they adduced for this departure was that Moses left them, and that they did not know what became of him (chap. xxxii. 1). Moses, they thought, served his time, and was good enough in his own day, but now they must take the lead into their own hands, make a new departure, and set up strange gods. But was not Aaron with them? Was he not a good man? Yes, Aaron was with them, and he was undoubtedly a good man. But he was not so faithful and steadfast as Moses, and the fact that he was a good man only gave a better opportunity to the Enemy to turn away the people from the fountain of living waters to broken cisterns that

could hold no water, and to embolden them in their sin. Satan prefers one good man to yield to his temptations to thousands of bad men. For he knows the people will say, "A good man did this, and it must be right because it was done by a good man." And this is an argument that is widely used in our day. If you speak against the errors that are brought into the Church, you are asked, Do you take upon yourself to say that the men at the head of these things, or the men who are associated with them in the church, are not good men? But there is a fallacy in that argument. They would require first to prove that good men have license to do wrong because they are good, which cannot be proved. There is no licence to sin given in the Word of God. "These things I write unto you that ye sin not" (John ii. 1). On the contrary, they are under greater obligations to do what is right, because they even profess to be good. Aaron was a good man, but he did wrong when he made the golden calf. His sin, however, was not a pure matter of choice; he was overcome by "the fear of man that bringeth a snare," which for a time eclipsed the fear of his God; and his sin is a warning to all, and particularly to those who connive at the idolatrous practices of our day. God, who is a jealous God, and who will not give His glory to another, nor His praise to graven images, chastised the people for this "great sin." He gave tokens of His displeasure against them for it. (1) He refused to accompany them the rest of the journey: "I will not go up in the midst of thee" (v. 3). Sin is the great cause why God denies His presence to individuals and churches: "I will now return to my place, and hide myself from them till they confess their sin and seek my face." When they depart from Him He departs from

them. And what is the good of a church when God departs from her? She is of no use—she can only go from bad to worse, and be an instrument for evil in the world. (2) He threatened the destruction of the whole congregation (chap. xxxii. 10), and three thousand of them were slain at the command of the Lord. “The wages of sin is death.” And if death is the desert of every sin, surely the sin of idolatry, which seeks not only to dethrone the Most High, but, if it were possible, to put Him out of existence, deserves the death that is the wages of sin in the highest degree. (3) The tabernacle was removed, and “pitched without the camp, far off from the camp” (v. 7). The Lord was not to be found in the camp—the people provoked Him to leave them—and those who sought His face would require now to go outside the camp, before they could find Him. There were some who could not be satisfied without Him, and these went out to seek Him where He was. History repeats itself. There have been times in Christian lands when the Lord’s people had to go outside the camp, because their God had left the camp, and could not be found there. Referring to the Jewish Church, who crucified the Lord of Glory, Paul says: “Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore without the camp bearing His reproach” (Heb. xiii. 12, 13). Jesus left the Jewish Church, and set up the New Testament Church. His people followed His example—they too went without the camp. The tabernacle is now pitched without the Jewish Church; it is in the Christian Church, and all who are awakened by the Spirit to see their sinful and lost state, and their need of Christ to save and bless them, must seek Him

where He is now to be found. In the time of the Covenanters this had to be done. The Lord was not to be found in the camp, and His people had to seek Him whom their souls loved in "the fields of the wood." At the time of the Disruption in 1843, those who sought the Lord had to go outside the camp. And even before the great crisis came there were many who had to do this. In parishes where there was a dead ministry, the people of God had to hold separate meetings of their own outside the church, because they could not find the bread of life ministered from the pulpit. There was a disruption on a small scale before the general Disruption took place. In some places the people "came out" before the ministers "came out." And is it not a fact that another disruption was pressed upon us in 1893 by the errors introduced into the church?—a disruption for which there were graver reasons than those which caused the Disruption in 1843. The tabernacle of the testimony left the camp, and we followed it in order to have the Lord's presence with us, and that "the truth as it is in Jesus" might be continued in our land, kept pure and entire, and perpetuated to coming generations. In doing so we have to bear the reproach of Christ. But we are willing, by grace, to bear the reproach of Him who bare our iniquities in His own body on the tree. "The love of Christ constraineth us."

II. Their repentance. Repentance was necessary ere they could get back the blessing they had lost by their sin. It is necessary in the case of all who would escape the wrath which is to come: "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." That they were brought to repentance we have evidence of in the context.

(1) We are told that they “ wept.” There is sorrow, godly sorrow, for sin in repentance. But before they mourned for their sin they were convinced of it. Conviction of sin precedes repentance. The Spirit of God convinces of sin, and works repentance in all that are saved. The Spirit convinces by means of the word of truth. And in the case of the people of Israel on this occasion their sin was brought home upon them by the word of the Lord through his servant Moses. When Moses came down from the mount he charged them with their sin: “ Ye have sinned a great sin.” And when they were convinced of their sin, and heard that the Lord’s presence was not to go with them, they “ wept.”

(2) Besides their weeping, they stripped themselves of their ornaments. They were commanded to do so. They, in their folly, stripped themselves to make a false god, which was made of gold, to make their religion more attractive to carnal eyes and carnal hearts, but now they strip themselves as a mark of their shame and sorrow for their sin, for following their own devices, instead of following the dictates of Him who leads His people in the way they should go. When individuals and churches that have forsaken the Lord, and changed their God and their creed, are brought to repentance, they shall strip themselves of their ornaments. They shall cast off and cast out those things which they had introduced into the churches to make the service of God more attractive to the carnal mind, things which have no warrant from the word of truth, and they shall return to the simplicity of the gospel. They shall cast out human hymns and organs, and other corruptions that defile instead of beautifying the service of Him who is a Spirit, and is to

be "worshipped in spirit and in truth." There shall be no hymns of human invention or organs of man's making in the church, we believe, during the glorious days of the millennium. These innovations have a place in the church when men are "on the down grade." But when the church "arises and shines," as we are sure she shall do, she shall strip herself of these "filthy rags," and put on her "beautiful garments." Then, through the power of the Spirit from on high, and the gracious presence of the Lord in the midst of her, all nations shall flow into her and abide in her, for there shall be no reason then for any to go outside the camp. The Lord shall dwell in her, and where He dwells His people who love His name delight to dwell.

(3) Their sin was made very bitter to them. Sin is a bitter thing, the bitterest thing in the world, and the children of Israel found out in their experience that it was so. Moses took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, ground it to powder, strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it (chap. xxxii. 20). Each and all had to drink of it, Aaron as well as the people. So the carnal joy they had when they danced before their new god was now turned into the gall of bitterness. Thus it must be with those who truly repent. They shall drink of the cup of their sins all their days in this world, and their sins after their conversion are made more bitter, as they are more dishonouring to God than the sins they committed in the days of their ignorance. They mourn bitterly for their sins. Though God forgave all their sins they cannot forgive themselves. The sin of Israel was the sin of backsliding, and it was therefore made very bitter to them.

III. The ground on which they received the promise. What was that ground? Some may say, "The people repented, and they received the blessing on that ground." Repentance is necessary to salvation, but it cannot be the ground of it. "If righteousness came by the law, then Christ died in vain." Repentance only prepared the people for the promised blessing, but they did not receive it on the ground of their repentance, nor can we receive the Lord's favour on that ground. What, then, was the ground? It was the mediation of Moses. The ground was not in themselves, it was in another. It was in Moses. Moses, you are to bear in mind, was a type of Christ. Behold, there is a greater than Moses here! Moses acted as mediator between God and the people, and through his mediation, as a type, they received God's favour. Christ is the one mediator between God and man, and it is on the ground of His mediatorial work, and that ground alone, that sinners obtain the blessings of salvation, and not on the ground of anything in themselves, either in a state of nature, as they are the children of wrath, or in a state of grace, as they are the children of God. They "are saved by grace through faith, and that not of themselves: it is the gift of God." Were it not so, none of our fallen race could have any hope of salvation. We must be indebted to Christ for salvation; the people of Israel were indebted to Moses as a type for the Lord's presence. Moses was in this instance a type of Christ in several respects: (1) He had no hand in the sin of the people. He was perfectly innocent so far as that sin was concerned. Christ had no hand in the sin of the people whom He came to seek and save. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." He "knew

no sin." He is "a Lamb without blemish." (2) Moses transacted with God on behalf of the people, with the view of making atonement for their sin (v. 30). Christ made a real atonement for the sins of His people. He did this when He offered Himself in their room and stead to satisfy the law of God which they transgressed, and under whose curse they came by their sins. "He is the propitiation for our sins." (3) Moses made intercession with God on behalf of the people, and obtained the blessing. Christ ever lives to make intercession for His people, and obtains the blessing for them. He pleads on the ground of His own merit. He suffered and died on their behalf to secure salvation, and by His intercession He receives the blessings of salvation from the Father, and bestows them freely, "without money and without price." "He restores that which He took not away." (4) Moses in his mediation had a special regard for the glory of God, while at the same time he sought the good of the people. Christ in mediation had a special regard for the glory of the Father, while at the same time He manifested His wondrous love to His people in laying down His life for them. "Father, glorify thy name." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (5) Moses, out of his love to the people committed to him, asked God to blot him out of His book rather than that they should perish for their sin. Christ was willing to be blotted out of God's book, so to speak, to be made a curse rather than that the people given Him in an everlasting covenant should perish under the curse of the law. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Moses was great, and acted nobly for the guilty people of Israel, but oh, there

is a greater than Moses here, the Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person, made in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin, except by imputation, humbling Himself, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that His guilty people might not perish but have eternal life! (6) Moses found favour in the sight of God, and he makes that a plea in his intercession for the people. Christ has been, and always is, in favour with God. "The Father loveth the Son." He loves Him even when He is pleased to bruise Him, and to give Him the awful cup of wrath to drink, the cup which His people would be drinking to all eternity had Christ not drunk it in their stead. And the blessed Mediator makes the Father's love a plea in His intercession on behalf of those whom He redeemed by His blood, that He might have them with Him where He is now, sitting on the right hand of the majesty in heaven: "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John xvii. 24). Let us then seek to know Christ, and to love and serve Him; and in all our approaches to God to have our eye, the eye of faith, fixed upon Him for the pardon of our sins and the acceptance of our persons and services. He is the mediator between God and men, "the way, the truth, and the life." No man cometh to the Father but by Him.

IV. The promise: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." This is a great and precious promise. It was given to the people of Israel in the time of need. It was not, however, peculiar to them; it

belongs to the Lord's people now, and they need it as much as the people to whom it was originally given. You in this large congregation, who are His people, need this promise, and it belongs to you. You are, this last day of the feast, going down from the mount of ordinances, and you need the Lord's presence with you. You are weak and helpless in yourselves; without Christ you can do nothing: but here is a staff He puts in your hand to lean upon, and to support you in your wilderness journey to the rest that remains to the people of God. When Israel was old and weak he needed support to enable him to follow the Lord in the path of duty, and we read that he worshipped, leaning on the top of a staff. This promise is a staff to strengthen the weak hands, to confirm the feeble knees, and to encourage the fearful hearts. But that we may derive benefit from it, it must be mixed with faith, and in order to receive it, we need to understand it. We need, therefore, the Spirit of truth to teach and guide us.

There are two great things in the promise—*First*, God's presence; *Second*, Rest. We need both. Without the presence of God we cannot enjoy the rest, and if we have His presence with us, we shall most assuredly attain the promised rest. Both are inseparably connected in the promise. The promise is one, but there are two precious streams flowing out of it to refresh God's heritage as they travel through the parched wilderness of this world.

First—The first part of the promise is in these words: "My presence shall go with thee." There are two things to be noticed here—(1) The blessing promised; (2) the promise of that blessing.

(1) The blessing—God's presence. "My presence." What are we to understand by God's presence? There are two senses in which it is spoken of in Scripture, His omnipresence and His gracious presence. By His omnipresence He is present everywhere; by His gracious presence He is present with His own people. In the former sense He is present with the wicked as well as with the righteous (Ps. cxxxix. 7-12); in the latter He is present with the righteous, while He is far away from the wicked. It is in the latter sense we are to understand the Lord's presence as spoken of in the text. It is His *gracious* presence that is promised. One may ask, "What is meant by His gracious presence?" If it is a natural man that asks the question, we must confess that we cannot explain it in such a way as that he can understand it: "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). All we can say to such is this: "Come and see." Seek to know it by divine teaching. "They shall all be taught of God." It is the Spirit of God alone that can impart this knowledge. "Flesh and blood" cannot give it. "Ye must be born again." It is those that are born again, and who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, who can know what it is. "The spiritual man knoweth all things." The gracious presence of the Lord need only be mentioned to such a man, and he knows what is meant by it. It means the favour of the Lord in which there is life, and His loving-kindness which is better than life. When the Lord lifts the light of His countenance upon His people, then they enjoy His presence. The psalmist knew what it was when he said, "Cause thy face to shine, and we

shall be saved" (Ps. lxxx. 3). Again, "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled" (Ps. xxx. 7). Job knew what it was when he said, "O that I knew where I might find Him!" Peter knew what it was by happy experience, when he said on the mount: "Master, it is good for us to be here." And we who have been waiting upon the Lord on the mount of ordinances, and commemorating the death of Christ in these days have to acknowledge to the praise of the glory of His grace, on this last day of the feast, that His presence has been with us. O, let us seek that His presence may go with us as we now go down from the mount! And this leads us to notice,

(2) The promise of that blessing, viz.: "My presence shall go with thee." The form in which this blessing is set before us is by way of promise. All the blessings which the Lord has provided in the covenant of grace, for the salvation of sinners, for the comforting of His people, and the perfecting of their salvation, are set before them in the form of promises, and all these promises are yea and amen in Christ to the glory of God the Father. This teaches us in our transacting with the Father for salvation that we are to do so by means of His own Word; and that if we are saved and obtain His favour, it is necessary to act faith in His word of promise. This faith is His own gift, and is wrought in us by the Spirit through the Word. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God," and not otherwise, whatever some, who are wise beyond what is written, may and do say. But to proceed to further consideration of the promise, two things are to be noticed, viz.—the party to whom the promise is given, and the need there is of the promise.

First—The party to whom the promise is given. It is given in the first place to Moses: “My presence shall go with thee,” and then through him to the people: “Unless thy presence go with us.” But Moses, as we observed, was a type of Christ. And so the promise of salvation is given by the Father, first to Him, and then through Him to His people. All blessings come to us through Christ, the one mediator between God and man. We are to ask in His name that the Father may be glorified in the Son (John xiv. 13). This is the Father’s will, and all the redeemed acquiesce in His will. It is doubly sweet when it comes to us from the hand of the Father through Him who shed His blood to secure the blessing for us.

Second—The need there was and is of the promise. The people of Israel needed it on many accounts, and so do we. (1) They needed His presence to *guide* them in the way they should go. They were in a wilderness through which they had never travelled before. They were “strangers in a strange land.” They were on their way to the Land of Promise, but they needed one to show them the way. And none could do this but He who says, “My presence shall go with thee.” An angel was not competent to be their guide, much less any mere man. Moses, who was a leader himself, needed to be led by a higher hand. None was more conscious of this than himself: “If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence” (v. 15). None would do but the Shepherd of Israel, who “leads Joseph like a flock.” It was He who led them in the past, except when they took the lead in their own hands, and He is able to lead them to the end. “This is our God for ever and ever; He will be our guide even unto death.” When the Lord says, “My

presence shall go with thee," we are to understand thereby that He Himself will go with them. Where His presence is, there He is Himself. The presence of the Lord was with Jacob when he slept in the open air on his way to Padan-aram, and he said, "The Lord is in this place." Christ was there. He is the presence of God the Father, "the Angel of His presence." Every revelation of the Father is through the Son. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." It was Christ then that was with the church, and led her in the wilderness. Oh, what a leader! Let us follow Him. There are many who are followers of men, and not of Jesus Christ, who is the King of His church as well as her Prophet and Priest. Such cry; "There are no leaders." But the church of God is never without a leader. Jesus Christ, the glorious Head of His church, "is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." And He may, according to His sovereign will, make use of the weakest instruments to promote His glory and advance His cause and kingdom in the world. The weaker and more unworthy the instruments are, the more it is seen that the glory of anything He is pleased to accomplish through them is due to Himself alone. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." "We are not sufficient of ourselves: our sufficiency is of God." The people needed not only to be shown the way, they needed also to be led into and kept in it, and enabled to go forward to possess the good land at the end of the journey. The Lord took Israel by the hand out of Egypt, and He "taught Ephraim to go, taking them by their arms" (Hos. xi. 3). There is a union between Christ and His people, and in consequence of that union

there is a communion. They, like Enoch, "walk with God." Christ is with them, He goes before, and they follow Him. He went before His people in the wilderness in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The church has her night as well as her day during her pilgrimage in the wilderness of this world, and Christ accommodates Himself to her various circumstances. The pillar of cloud could not be seen in the night time, and therefore he gives the pillar of fire to shine on their path; and thus, in the night of tribulation and perplexity, He gives them more of His presence. As their tribulation abounds, so their consolation abounds. He makes darkness light before them. The cloudy pillar by which He led Israel was a visible representation of His presence. The Lord was in that cloud, and the people were guided by this visible sign. In all their movements, during their march as well as in their encampments, they were to be regulated by these means of guidance. Where, and how long, they were to rest was indicated by the resting of the cloud, and when they were to resume their march was made known by the moving of the cloud. They would require, therefore, to have their eye always on the cloud. There might have been other clouds, but this was the only sure means of guidance. But some might mistake a common cloud for the special cloud which was to guide the people. How could the one be distinguished from the other? The common cloud was driven by every wind that blew; the special was moved according to the will of the Lord. He was in that cloud, and directed its motions. The one was dependent on the wind, the other on the will of God. It would be dangerous, then, to mistake the one for the other. The church at present is surrounded by this

danger. False teachers are compared to clouds, and there is great need of the warning, "Be not carried about with every wind of doctrine." There are many false teachers occupying high positions in the visible church in this age, who have forsaken the good old way, and have strayed into bye-paths of their own making. Why have they forsaken the good old way? They thought that was too tedious; they tell us they want to make progress. They profess to be "men of progress." It is quite possible that the cloud driven by the wind would make more progress in one day than the cloud in which the Lord's presence was would make in a month. But what kind of progress would it be? That depended on what direction the wind blew. All the progress depended on that, and on that alone. We are sure that those who follow the tendency that is not according to God's Word make progress *backward* and not forward. Such is the progress made by the men who profess to be men of progress in our day. It is said that it is because of the great learning of these men they have adopted their new theology. They may have a learning of a sort. But we read in Scripture of some who were "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." But that the views which they promulgate are an evidence of their learning none can believe but those who are ignorant of the history of the Church. There are no errors introduced now but a schoolboy might know as well as they by reading Dr Owen and other great writers, who discussed and refuted them by the Word of God in their own day. The errors that have been buried in the grave by the learned and godly men of the past are now revived in the dark night that has fallen on this generation. There was a time when medical doctors

raised dead corpses out of the grave to dissect them so as to acquire skill in their profession, but because the law of the land was against such work they took good care not to do it in the day time—when the sun was up. They did their work in the night, in the dark. So it is now. When errors are revived it is a sign that it is night in the church. But there is this sad difference: while it was unlawful for these men to raise dead bodies, the Church has made a law to enable false teachers to revive and teach erroneous doctrines. That law protects them in doing the work of darkness, and they cannot be stopped until the Lord comes in power and causes that Church to bury her dead. Beware of false teachers. Keep close to the Word of God. It is the only rule of faith and practice. As the Lord was in the cloud, He is in His Word. The Word is the outward means of guidance now; and Christ promises His presence with the Church so long as she continues to “teach the people to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded.” But whenever she ceases to teach what He has commanded, and begins to teach the commandments of men, He withdraws His presence and leaves her to her own devices. The Word is the sure means of guidance, but the blind cannot see. We need, therefore, the inward illumination of the Spirit, that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened in a spiritual knowledge of the outward rule given, and that our hearts may be disposed to follow its guidance.

(2) They needed His presence to *feed* them. The people needed food as well as guidance. They would soon die in the wilderness without food. The wilderness was a wilderness without human inhabitants and without food. But the Lord fed them. He did wonderful things

which they looked not for in the desert. "This is a desert place . . . send them away." No, they can be fed in this barren desert. He gave them bread from heaven. He fed them with manna. Now, had not His presence gone with them, the people would have died in the wilderness for want of food. The people of God are living persons, spiritually alive, and they need Christ to feed as well as guide them. He Himself is their life, the bread of life, "the true bread that came down from heaven, of which if a man eat he shall never die." He is "the hidden manna." Of His fulness they have all received. The Word which is given to the church to guide her is also the means whereby she is fed. The church cannot dispense with the Word, either as a means of guiding or as a means of feeding. And those in our day who have abandoned the Word of God as their rule evidence by their so doing that they know not what it is to live on Christ as the bread of life. But Christ will feed His own. "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd" (Isa. xl. 11). He feeds them by His Word and Spirit. The Spirit glorifies Christ by taking of the things that are His and showing them to His people. Though in a wilderness, they are not, after all, so ill off. Christ is with them; their table is furnished daily with provision sent down from heaven; they live at the expense of the King of Glory; and, therefore, though in themselves poor, without money and without price, in either purse or hand, they are welcome to the provision which, of His goodness, the Lord has prepared for the poor (Ps. lxxviii. 10).

(3) They needed His presence to *comfort* them. There is no true comfort without the Lord's presence. Some go to broken cisterns for comfort in the time of

trouble, and for happiness in the time of misery. They go to the creature instead of going to the Creator for the blessing which can only be found in Him in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell. There were many troubles to be met with in the wilderness which would cause sorrow and sinking of heart. But Christ was present to comfort them. He is a present help in the time of trouble. He was present with the disciples when He said, "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

(4) They need His presence to *protect* them from the dangers and the enemies of the wilderness, and to enable them to triumph over them. The children of Israel had to meet with enemies on their way to the good land. These would do their utmost to obstruct their passage, and to keep them from entering the promised rest. But Christ, who knew all the dangers and enemies to which they were exposed, and knew also His own sufficiency to overcome all these difficulties, says, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." "Thou art weak and helpless, but 'in me is thy help.' " If we would enter the rest that remains to God's people, we too shall meet with enemies on the way. We have enemies within and enemies without. The flesh, sin, is an enemy in us, the world and the devil are the enemies without. These three are combined against the people of God in all ages. Those without are formidable, but the enemy within is the more dangerous. One enemy in the camp is more dangerous than many without: he betrays us to those outside. One traitor in the garrison of Khartoum opened the gate to those outside, and was the means of

destroying the whole army. Achan, in the camp of Israel, was worse for the people than all the men of Ai. Indwelling sin is more dangerous, hurtful, and more difficult to overcome than all the enemies without. So also are enemies within the church. They do more harm to the cause of God than all outside her pale. But in this promise, "My presence shall go with thee," is our encouragement and our strength. "Thou art my king, O God: command deliverances for Jacob. Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us. For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us. In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever." (Ps. xlv. 4-8). When the people of Israel provoked the Lord to withdraw His presence, a few of their enemies would discomfit them, but when they walked in the way of His commandments, one of them would put to flight a thousand. The Lord was with them and fought for them. "O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries." It is by the Lord's presence that the church can overcome all her enemies: and the church of believers shall be made more than conquerors through Him who loved and gave Himself for them. "He must reign till all His enemies are made His footstool." The last enemy, death, shall be destroyed. This shall be accomplished at the end of their wilderness journey.

(5) They needed His presence to *carry* them safely across the river Jordan. They got safely across the Red Sea, but now Jordan stands between them and the land

of promise. There was no way of reaching that good land but by crossing the river. Ah, friends, the river of death is before us, and we cannot get to heaven but through death. We need Christ with us. All the people of Israel that crossed Jordan landed in Canaan, but all who pass through death to the eternal world shall not land in heaven. "Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." To be born again, to be in Christ, and He in us, to be made holy as He is holy, is the only passport to the heavenly Canaan. If we are thus prepared, Christ's presence shall go **with** us to carry us safely over death to possess the glorious inheritance beyond the river. But how did the people of Israel get over Jordan to possess the land beyond? It was by Christ's presence. Besides the cloud and the fire that were their guides, there was the ark in the camp. The ark was a symbol of the Lord's presence. The law was in the ark, and the mercy-seat covered the ark, typifying the propitiation of Christ whereby He magnified the law. It was on the ground of His atoning sacrifice, prefigured by the Paschal Lamb, they were brought out of bondage in Egypt, and it is on the same ground they shall now cross Jordan into the Promised Land. We do not mean that all that entered the earthly Canaan had a saving interest in the atonement of Christ. But the people of Israel were typical of the people of God, His covenant people, given to Christ by the Father in the eternal covenant of grace. All this "Israel shall be saved," and it is on the same ground that they were saved from a state of sin and wrath they shall be brought through death to heaven.

But to return to the people we left on the brink of Jordan. Let us see how they passed over the river, and

let us learn how we shall pass the river of death if we have Christ's presence when we come to the brink of eternity. The Lord went before them and opened up a way. The priests went with the ark to the brink of Jordan, while all the congregation stood still to behold omnipotent power put forth by the Creator of heaven and earth, before whose glorious presence heaven and earth shall one day flee away! What is Jordan before such a power? As soon as the feet of the priests touched the waters, Jordan fled (Ps. cxiv. 5). The river was dried, and the people passed over dryshod, while the priests that carried the ark stood in the midst of Jordan. Then the priests themselves went over, and Jordan, at the command of Jehovah, overflowed its banks again. All this was done in fulfilment of the promise, "My presence shall go with thee." And this promise is to God's people in all ages. He has promised to be with them alway, even unto the end of the world, yea for ever and ever. He will be with them in the valley of the shadow of death, and, therefore, they shall fear no evil. When He has prepared them by His grace on earth for His fellowship and service in heaven, He "will receive them unto Himself, that where He is they may be also" (John xiv. 3).

Second—Rest. "I will give thee rest." This is the second part of the promise. In the wilderness the people had not much rest. But they had one great privilege: Christ's presence. They found, however, no permanent rest till they were settled in their inheritances. The rest of Canaan is a type of the rest of heaven, and the heirs of glory shall not find permanent rest till they reach heaven. We shall then speak of the promise as it respects them. But before we speak of the nature of

the rest, it may be observed that the blessing promised is a gift. "I will give." It is not a thing that is merited by those who obtain, but a thing that is freely given. Eternal life is a free gift (Rom. vi. 23). It is given for the sake of Jesus Christ. It is given on the terms of the covenant of grace. And those that will not receive the blessing on these terms shall never enjoy it. Let them remember this ere it be too late. God will not change His own terms for any man. This important matter has been finally arranged in an unchangeable covenant that is "ordered in all things and sure." The promised rest is the gift of God. It has two parts: first, the rest of grace, and second, the rest of glory. "The Lord will give grace and glory" (Ps. lxxxiv. 11). The former is given in this world; the latter, in the world to come. Both are given for the sake of Jesus Christ. (1) *The rest of grace.* This includes, among other things—

(1) Peace with God, that is, reconciliation through the blood of Christ, by which He satisfied the justice of the law. It is on the ground of Christ's satisfaction sinners can be reconciled to God. "Be ye reconciled to God." "For He hath made Him to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 20, 21). This blessing is freely bestowed on believers, on their receiving Christ by faith. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God" (Rom. v. 1). This is the first great blessing in the rest of grace. They have the rest of reconciliation. "We who have believed do enter into rest" (Heb. iv. 3).

(2) Peace of conscience. This blessing follows reconciliation, and is an effect of it. It can never be had before reconciliation. It is one of the fruits of the Spirit given to those whose sins are pardoned, and is an

evidence of their reconciliation. It is the happy effect of the blood of Christ sprinkled on the conscience, purging it from dead works to serve the living God (Heb. ix. 14). This inward peace of soul is an echo of that outward peace which our blessed Redeemer accomplished when He cried, "It is finished." And those to whom Christ gives it have rest. It is, however, imperfect in this life; it is subject to changes, while their reconciliation is unchangeable.

(3) Rest of satisfaction, with Christ as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. They rest in Him as the one Mediator between God and men, their Surety, Substitute, and Head in the covenant of Grace, in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell. They heartily acquiesce in God's way of salvation through Jesus Christ. They are satisfied with Christ as their Saviour and their portion for time and eternity, and well they may. Here they find rest. "This is all my salvation and all my desire" (2 Sam. xxiii. 5).

(4) Rest of communion with God. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." Man, before the fall, enjoyed rest in fellowship with God; but when he sinned he lost that blessing, and man now is without true rest, and goes from one thing to another, crying, "Who will show us any good?" (Ps. iv. 6). He cannot find the good he really needs till he returns to God to enjoy His favour and fellowship. Believers find moments of sweet rest in His fellowship. "I sat down under His shadow with great delight" (Sol. ii. 3). "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias" (Matt. xvii. 4).

But they must "arise and go hence," for in this world unbroken fellowship cannot be enjoyed. That is reserved for the state of glory.

(5) Rest in the service of God. We believe that man in the state of innocency enjoyed perfect rest in doing the will of his Creator as well as in the enjoyment of His favour and fellowship. And what is salvation, in the application thereof, but the restoring of man to God, to His image, which he had lost by sin, and to His service, for which he was created? The redeemed, who **are** "created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works," begin to serve God, to do His will, and they find rest in this work. They do not rest on their endeavours to serve the Lord as the ground of their acceptance with Him, but they delight to do His will. They have something of the mind of Christ, who said, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God, yea, Thy law is within my heart" (Ps. xl. 8). They have the rest of delight in the service of their Lord and Master. This service is congenial to the new nature wrought in them by the Spirit in regeneration, and nothing can satisfy the new creature but to be enabled to glorify God, and to enjoy Him. This is the grand work for which we were created. And if we are born again, we shall find rest in doing God's will as revealed in His Word. Those who never found any more delight in the Lord's service than they found in a secular employment have much cause to fear that they are strangers to the blessing promised in the text.

(6) Rest of hope. "Good hope through grace." Those who are without a well-founded hope for eternity are without rest, and whatever other hope they may have, it shall perish at death. Paul, speaking as the mouthpiece of the church, and looking forward to the

dissolution of the body, says: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. v. 1). All believers may not be able to express their hope with such confidence and certainty, yea, many of them have not, and the best of them cannot have the same strength of hope always; but they all have the grace of hope in being, and the exercise of it is not in their own power. They are dependent upon the Spirit of all grace for its exercise. Weak hope is hope as sure as strong hope; and the Lord will not cast away His people though they may be afraid that they have not the hope that is saving. But that you may examine yourselves to see if you are in possession of the hope that maketh not ashamed, consider that the Holy Spirit is its author: that it is only those that are regenerated that can have it; that the Word of God is its warrant, and that it leads to holiness. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure" (1 John iii. 3). Hope gives the believer the rest of anticipation. It has respect to those blessings promised, but not yet realised. "For we are saved by hope" (Rom. viii. 24).

(2) *The rest of glory.* This rest is given to believers in the world of eternity. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Their souls shall enter this rest at death; their bodies, re-united to their souls, shall enjoy full possession of it at the resurrection. What is this rest? It is (1) Rest from sin, perfect and everlasting deliverance from that evil. They were, at their conversion, in a sense delivered from sin. They were delivered from its guilt in their justification; they were delivered from its reigning power in their regeneration, but the

work of sanctification is not perfected till death. At death they are delivered from the very being of sin. They are "made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory." In the state of grace on earth they carried a body of sin which made them groan and cry for deliverance: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But in heaven they are never troubled with sin; a vain thought never passes through their minds. They are as free from sin as Adam was when God created him in His own holy image. And a great element in the happiness of the redeemed in glory is the assurance that they shall never fall again into a state of sin. "Because I live," says Christ, "ye shall live also" (John xiv. 19). (2) Rest from all the evils which sin brought, and to which it made them liable. When the cause has been removed the effect must cease. Whatever troubles may afflict the just on earth, from the devil, the world, or their own evil hearts, they cannot follow them to the rest of glory. There is no room for them there. They may and shall follow them to the brink of Jordan, but no further are they allowed to come. "In the world," Christ says, "Ye shall have tribulation." Their tribulation is limited by the bounds of time, "the world." Christ promised to give them rest from sin and all evil, and He will give it. Satan, knowing that all the trouble he can give them must be done in this world, does his utmost while he has the opportunity; and the nearer they are to their Father's house, the keener he is to molest them, knowing that his time is short. But in glory they are for ever set free from all that caused them sorrow on earth: "The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their

heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away '' (Is. xxxv. 10).

(3) Rest of enjoyment. They shall have the enjoyment of God, and that for ever. They enjoyed Him on earth, but their enjoyment was neither full nor lasting. It was often interrupted by sin in themselves, sin in the world around them, and the temptations of Satan; but in glory their enjoyment shall be full, uninterrupted, and everlasting. Who can in this world comprehend the full import of this? The redeemed have foretastes on earth, but it doth not yet appear what they shall be. They shall also have the communion of saints. They loved and desired this communion on earth, and if it was so precious and desirable in the state of imperfection, how much more so in the state of perfection! They shall enjoy the company of holy angels, which shall contribute to their happiness. They are all of one family in Christ, a holy and happy family.

(4) Rest in due appreciation of their deliverance from sin and misery, and of the unspeakable obligations they are under to Christ for His great mercy: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

(5) What may be called *active rest*. The redeemed shall enjoy such rest in heaven. They were never on earth so active in serving the Lord as they shall be in heaven. The idea generally attached to the term rest is inaction; but when we speak of the rest of glory it has no such meaning. It means, among other things, the employment of the saints as they surround the throne

above. God created them for the manifestation of His glory, as well as for their enjoyment of Him. Eternity shall be an everlasting Sabbath, and the redeemed shall be employed in the worship and service of God without ceasing for ever and ever. But do they not need some rest from work? Their work is their rest; and if their work could be interrupted even for one moment, their rest in heaven would be disturbed. But we are assured that no such interruption shall mar their happiness: "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple" (Rev. vii. 15). The body at the resurrection, reunited to the soul, shall be put in possession of the rest of glory. Death separated between soul and body, but did not separate either from Christ. At the resurrection they shall meet again to part no more. The whole man was created for the glory and enjoyment of God; the whole man was redeemed by Christ, and regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit; and now soul and body shall be glorified together, that they may glorify Him whose they are: "Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. vi. 20).

In conclusion, there are several lessons that we ought to learn from the portion of Scripture which we have been considering:

(1) The proneness of all men to sin in general, and the sin of idolatry in particular. Some are professedly worshippers of idols; all, in their natural state, are practical idolaters. Whatever object takes up the place of God in the hearts and minds of men is their God.

(2) A warning to the visible church in our day. The sin committed in the camp of Israel was not the sin of

individuals only, but the sin of the whole congregation; and when we bear in mind that the whole visible church of God was gathered together there, we see that the whole visible church, excepting a few persons, was guilty of forsaking the Lord, guilty of idolatry. The visible church in our day is divided into several denominations, and is it not patent to all whose eyes are open, that these denominations, with very few exceptions, are guilty of forsaking the Lord? The sin of this generation, so far as the cause of the Lord is concerned, is the sin of the professing church as a whole.

(3) The duty of repentance. The people of Israel repented, and it is the duty of professing churches now to repent. The Lord calls as He did to Israel of old: "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity" (Hos. xiv. 1). But alas! the only response as yet to be heard from backsliding churches is: "No, for I have loved strangers, and after them I will go" (Jer. ii. 25).

(4) That God, according to His eternal purpose, will bring His own people into the glorious inheritance which He prepared for them before the foundation of the world, notwithstanding their sins and their unworthiness. They are "saved by grace," and "accepted in the Beloved."

(5) A call to the Lord's remnant to faithfulness in following Him according to His Word, in testifying against sin, sin in themselves, sin in the church, and sin in the nation. Let them be like Moses when he came down from the mount with a message from God. Let them declare, without the fear of man, the awful denunciations pronounced by God against men for their sins.

(6) That *now* is the time to labour for the Lord and for the good of precious souls ; and that there is work to be done on earth which cannot be done in heaven. Let those who labour in the Word be up and doing, for “ the night cometh when no man can work.”

(7) Lastly, when God’s people shall have finished their course they shall receive a crown of righteousness, as Paul tells us : “ Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day ; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing ” (2 Tim. iv. 8). Then they shall understand the full meaning of the precious promise, “ My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”

II.

JOSIAH'S REFORMATION.

II. Chronicles xxxiv. 1, 2.

THE Word of God gives us the history of His cause in the past. Sometimes it was very low, and when it was so low that there was none to help His people, then the Lord began to revive it. In the days of Josiah it was very low. His grandfather, Manasseh, had brought this about by his sin against God. Hezekiah, his father, had left the cause in a flourishing condition at his death. And in this condition it was delivered to Manasseh when he succeeded his father on the throne. Manasseh was bound to keep it in this condition, but this he did not do. Instead of doing so, he began to set up new ways of worship to suit his own taste. Perhaps he would not say that Hezekiah was not a godly man, but he would contend that the things that suited his father's time would not do in his generation. So he pulled down what his father had set up. He set up another order of things instead, and he borrowed his new order from the idolatrous customs of the heathen around him. He set up the image of Baal in the house of the Lord. Not only was it the case that he went as far as the heathen away from God, but he actually led his people further away from God than the very heathen.

Let us now see how he acted when he found out that the way of transgressors is hard. He took pains to pull down what he had built up with his own hands. He had

first been at the pains of pulling down what his godly father had built up, and these he had built up according to his own inventions. Now, however, he had to pull down what he had spent a lifetime in building up, and to build up what he had spent his days in pulling down. Such are the troublous ways of sin. Matters would have been all right had he continued them as he had found them. Though Manasseh got repentance, and his soul was saved, the Lord kept his sins in remembrance, and though he did his utmost after his conversion to build up, yet his son Amon followed the evil example of Manasseh's earlier days, and pulled down the cause of God again. Men in this generation are busy at work pulling down what our fathers built up. See, although Hezekiah left the cause of God prosperous, others pulled it down. So with the men of this age, after our fathers laid the foundations, their sons attempt to raze them. That Manasseh got repentance and pardon cannot afford them the slightest excuse for their conduct. He got repentance, and is in glory, but the evil of his rebellion against God continued after his death, and many poor souls were brought by its means to the pit of ruin.

Amon succeeded Manasseh, and he reigned for only two years, yet he spent them in doing what he could to injure and to overthrow the worship and kingdom of God. Satan did not know how short Amon's reign was to be, but had he known it he could not have asked him to undertake any work worse than what he put his hands to. For he spent his short reign in trying to overthrow the cause of God.

But when the Lord has a work to do, He raises up fit instruments to do it. It is a bad sign for the generation when wicked kings are raised up. Saul was given to the

children of Israel in judgment. On the other hand, when good is intended for a country—when a kingdom is to be reformed—the Lord raises up men in high position to do His work. The poor and humble ones do not reform whole kingdoms. They may be owned and blessed for local reformation and the advance of Christ's cause in their own neighbourhood, but a national reformation is not a case of rain falling on one city and not falling on another. The shower is general all over the land when the land is to be turned to God.

From the time of David and Solomon, Israel had not the privilege of godly rulers. On the death of Solomon the ten tribes revolted from the house of David and followed Jeroboam and his sin. It was a great blessing that Judah enjoyed when the Most High raised up over the southern kingdom a number of godly kings, and after times of decay and backsliding He raised up reforming kings. Of these was Josiah.

There are two things which are worthy of notice regarding this good king: his personal character and the good work he did in his day. There is a very high character given him in the Word of God. "And like unto him there was no king before him that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses, neither after him arose there any like him" (2 Kings xxiii. 25). "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left" (2 Chron. xxxiv. 2). This is the character given him, not by himself or by a fellow-creature, but by the Lord who knows the heart. There were other good kings in Judah, but none like unto Josiah, either before or after him.

He was made good, and then he did good. “He did that which is good in the sight of the Lord. It is taken notice of that he declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left. He followed the Lord in the straight way of His commandments. “The ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them” (Hos. xiv. 9). It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but the Lord led him and kept him. Josiah was born into the world like other men, a sinner, but he was “born again” when young. Many of those whom the Lord makes eminently useful in the church and kingdom are converted in their youth. Indeed, the most of those saved in any generation are effectually called before they are old. Comparatively few are brought into the kingdom of grace when they attain to old age, though the door of mercy is open, so far as we know, till death. Josiah began to reign when he was eight years of age, and whatever secret strivings he may have experienced in his boyhood, not till he was sixteen years do we see any indication of a saving change. At that age we are told that “he began to seek after the God of David his father.” Though the son of a wicked father, who set a bad example before him, the Spirit of God found access to his soul, and began a good work in him. The Spirit works by the use of means and instruments. Although the book of the law was lost, it is probable that there were extracts of it among the people whereby the young prince might acquire as much knowledge of his lost condition and the way of salvation as was blessed to him. Besides, there were at least two eminent prophets in the land—Jeremiah and Zephaniah—whose teaching he may have heard. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” One thing we may be sure of that the

Word of the Lord was used in his conversion. There was oral teaching by the prophets, besides what was written in the book of the law. The prophets spake by the inspiration of the Spirit. The first indication of the work of the Spirit in Josiah was that he, like Saul of Tarsus, began to pray. "Behold, he prayeth." There were many others in the land of Judah who prayed to gods who could neither hear nor help them, but this young king prayed to "the God of David his father." He not only prayed to Him for mercy, like the publican, but he sought after him, sought to know Him as his covenant God, to love and obey him. The secret of his success afterwards lay in his unfeigned piety, his knowledge of God, and his love to Him. He was made good before he was used to do good. Those whom the Lord makes instruments for good to others, whether they are kings or ministers of the gospel, He prepares them by His grace. Kings need grace for their work as well as prophets. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord" (2 Sam. xxiii. 3). Josiah began to rule over men, and he ruled in the fear of the Lord. He is a good example for all young people to follow, whatever station in society they occupy, whether they be kings or subjects. And it was a great privilege to the Church and the State that a God-fearing king was set over them. The cause of the Lord in a nation is very much according to the people composing the nation, and a great deal depends upon the rulers of the people. When there was a good king in Israel and Judah the cause prospered, but when there was a bad king it declined. And so it is still. Rulers have a great influence over the people either for good or evil. When the glorious days, or rather years, of the millennium

shall come, kings shall be nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers of the Church.

Josiah was not only a man of eminent piety, but he was a man who gave himself wholly to the work to which he was called. All he did, he did it "with all his heart," his heart was in the work as well as his hand. "And with all his soul," his whole soul was in what he did. "And with all his might," he spared not himself, but exerted all the spiritual and natural energy that the Lord bestowed upon him. He was willing to spend, and be spent for the cause of truth and righteousness. The rule by which he did everything was the will of God made known to him in His Word. So it is recorded of him that "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." He was not actuated by public opinion, but by "thus saith the Lord." Many do some good actions—good as to the matter of them—that they may receive the applause of their fellow-men, but Josiah acted so as to receive the approval of God. He acted in his responsible calling as one who had to give an account of his stewardship. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ."

If the people of God knew that they were to have a ruler who feared God for such a time, it would be a source of great comfort to them. They would be pleased that a long reign was before him. When he was only eight years on the throne he began to seek the God of David his father. It was a beautiful sight to see the youthful king praying at the age of sixteen, not to idols, but to the Lord God of His fathers. The Word of God gives no good report of those that do not seek God whether they are old or young. Its command, and the example of such as Josiah, have this message, however, to convey

—“ Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near.” This godly king at the age of sixteen was an example to old and young alike. It would cheer and comfort his heart to hear of others, whether old or young, that were seeking the Lord. Such was the mind of John when he said that he had no greater joy than to know that his children walked in the truth. He ought to be an example, not only to people in general, but also to rulers. Most of them, however, fail to profit from his example. They prefer in our times to lead the people to all kinds of vanity and folly. This was not the course Josiah pursued. He was not alone concerned for his own personal salvation. He was concerned about his example and its influence. He prayed as Saul of Tarsus prayed for himself, but this did not satisfy him. In the calling in which he was called, he put the matter thus to himself—“ I must act according to my opportunities. They are many, and I am responsible for the use I make of them. I will put them to the best advantage. I must rule in the fear of God.” His godliness broke out in the calling in which he was called. He began to be concerned for his people that they too should fear God. He looked to see how they were, and he found the whole land full of idolatry. The love of Christ works like itself in all ages. When it sets a soul aflame he begins to ask himself, “ How are my friends? How are my neighbours? How is my country?” Before you were converted your thought corresponded with Cain’s words, “ Am I my brother’s keeper?” but now you look to see how godliness fares in the town or country in which you live.

When he looked out and saw the state of the land he had cause to rend his clothes and weep. In the days of

Manasseh or Amon, the king might look to see if the people had theatres, public parks, and places of amusement. Josiah's interest, however, was in other things. He came out among his people to see how the cause of God prospered among them. When he did look, he saw, like Paul at Athens, many altars, but they were not to the God of Israel. If you read the twenty-third chapter of Second Kings you will see in what a terrible state the land was. Its state, however, did not check his reforming good. He did not begin to say, "I must not begin to meddle with matters as they are, or I shall displease men everywhere." He said rather, "I must break down every altar and abomination within my kingdom."

When he undertook the task of reforming his kingdom his work was two-fold. On the one hand it was destructive, on the other hand it was constructive. Some might be disposed to say to him: "You may set up the worship of God without pulling down these idols." His reply would be: "What concord is there between Christ and Belial, between the temple of God and idols?" Had this course been adopted idolatry would soon be set up again, for so it was in the reigns that went before. You see the altar of Jeroboam at Bethel had not been pulled down during all the preceding reigns. Idolatry is like a tree. Its branches may be whipped off, but unless it will be uprooted it will still live and grow.

Josiah did not send other people to do this work and stay himself idly at home. No, he did not trust this work to his servants. He burned the bones of the priests on their altar, and you may see he himself was present by the account of his coming to the grave of the prophet that came from the land of Judah. He told them to let this grave alone. As surely as it is the duty of fathers

to see to the promotion of the fear of God in their families, so surely is it the duty of kings to attend to the cause of Christ in their kingdoms. But if Josiah had lived in our days he would get many a minister to say to him—"You have no right as a civil magistrate to take anything to do with the house of God. You have as much right to keep up the Papacy or Mohammedanism as the cause of Christ." Josiah was not a Disestablisher. Any argument will satisfy those who have not the cause of Christ at heart. Cain said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" as though he had required that to be told to him. "No one," he said, "said to me that I was my brother's keeper," and so he slew him. Josiah was thorough-going in his reform. When Manasseh repented, he threw out of the city the idols and altars which he had made in the days of his ignorance, but Josiah beat them into small dust, and went with it to Bethel, as though he said—"It was here idolatry began, and I am now throwing the dust of your idolatry in your face." There are places in this land that were centres of declension from God, and from generation to generation you scarcely hear of a soul converted in these places. Why? The wrath of God rests upon them. Take good care that forsaking God will not begin at your house lest His wrath settle down upon your house and family.

When the Spirit searches out sins He goes to the root. He goes to the garden of Eden where sin began. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." By the sin of one many have fallen. Some might merely say, "How wicked the land is." Another might add, "I remember when there were only two idols in it," but Josiah went behind present appearances to the sin of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin all these sins. If there

was a fountain poisoned, and you saw some who drank from its streams and were poisoned, you would not halt at the streams, you would trace the poison to the fountain. So he who first set up idolatry was the fountain of the nation's idolatry. However small the sin may be in its beginning, the Lord will bring back the ashes of idolatry to that place. When did such declension begin in this land? When men began to introduce uninspired hymns into the worship of God. We would seek to bring the ashes and cast them upon those that began the sin. Josiah would carry his own share of the ashes, and so do you, young men, young women, old men, old women, and say to those who would lead you astray, "Do not come any nearer me."

Josiah, however, did not stop at the idols. He went on to the teachers of the people. When the displeasure of God is shown to a people, unfaithful teachers are placed over their heads. In Josiah's time religious leaders were unfaithful. Before his time there had been such also. There were the living and the dead, and they were each dealt with after their own fashion. In times of declension any sort of teachers will do, men that will not be too hard on us or rebuke us. I heard of a certain minister who conciliated the young men of his congregation by appearing among them on the first Saturday afternoon he was among them to join in their silly sports. This conduct would suit Manasseh and Amon very well.

Do you ask, however, "What shall we do when we have no godly ministers in our midst?" Why, keep to the praying men. Have nothing to do with men who will suffer you to trample on the Lord's day. This is full of instruction alike for speakers and hearers. Some who were not of the tribe of Levi had been put into the priest-

hood. What did Josiah do with them? He killed them, and burned them upon the altars. God commanded him to do this, but this is not now to be done literally. Only God will burn such offenders eternally. In reforming the church, it is right to condemn not only those who are still alive who had a hand in corrupting it, but also those who are dead. We are not, indeed, to raise their bones out of the grave and burn them literally, as this king did, but to raise them from their graves by bringing to the remembrance of our hearers the evil they had done to the cause of God, and burning their bones by the fire of God's Word. "Is not my word as a fire?" (Jer. xxiii. 29). What did he do with the sons of Levi? He put them out of their office, but showed his mercy in this that he ordered them to be fed while they lived. They were in office only for their back and belly, and what they wanted they got, but they got no authority to put their finger to the cause of Christ. If he lived to-day he would find many ministers and elders he might put out of office. Many are in office that they may get a piece of bread, and if they get their bread they are content. If a Josiah were to rise up in our land, many, if they got their living, would be content to give up their office. When people call such men to be their pastors, they virtually say, "We ask you to keep us from escaping from the devil's camp. We ask you to come to keep us from Christ, and to make sure that we will be lost for ever."

But were not some of these deceivers dead? Yes. So the next question arose, "Where are their graves?" Perhaps some old man led Josiah to their graves. Their bones were raised up. "Where now are the altars where they sacrificed?" They are in yonder town. The bones

must be brought there and burned on their altars. There was one grave undisturbed, that of the prophet from Judah who had prophesied about the altar. “He cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord: Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men’s bones shall be burnt upon thee” (1 Kings xiii. 2). The wicked king tried to kill him, but was prevented. Three hundred and fifty years had now passed since the time that God told by his prophet that Josiah should arise and do these things. In the meantime there had been several small reformations in the land of Judah, but none so thorough as this one.

He now comes to the temple. What did he find there? Men were worshipping the sun, moon and stars. There were prophets in Judah, Jeremiah, etc., but see how low a land may come in a short time. Leave Skye for a hundred years without the Bible, and you would find it at the end of that period like a heathen land. What should this teach you and me? “Hold fast that which thou hast that no man take thy crown.” But Josiah turned all idols out of the house of God, for “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” What did they find in the house? The book of the law of God. The Highlands of Scotland were long without the Scriptures, and how were they then? In utter darkness. This was not like the ark. It was lost amongst the Philistines, but the book of the law was lost in the house of God. It is a fearful thing when the law of God is lost in the Church. Until this happened idolatry could not be set up in the temple. When the rule was lost the

worship went astray. Had the law been kept these things could not take place. Here is teaching for us. In a sense the Bible is lost in our days. People may say we have the Bible, we did not take a part of Isaiah or the Song of Songs away. They might say the same thing in Josiah's day. The law was *in* the temple, but at the same time it was lost there. It was lost under the rubbish that was heaped over it. It is hid from the eyes of many in our time, but the Lord be praised, not from the eyes of all. You may ask who have lost it? The Higher Critics have. Those also have lost it who misinterpret its teaching about man's fall, and his hopeless ruin in an undone eternity and other fundamental doctrines. We don't know how the book of the law was lost. Some think it was hidden to preserve it, others that it was thrown away. I believe the latter to be the true explanation. Though it was lost, it was not lost irrecoverably, for the Word of the Lord endures for ever. So it was found again. By whom? By Hilkiyah, a godly man, who found it, and was delighted with what he found. Who will recover the Bible when it is lost? The very class of men by whom it was lost. The Almighty, as it were, says to Satan, "If your ministers lost my Word, I will find it by my ministers." Luther was one of those who found the lost Bible. Hilkiyah found the book, and not the men who were removing the rubbish. If ministers were the means of losing the book, other ministers found it. When was it found? Not in the days of Manasseh, not in the days of Amon, not till they began to clear the rubbish out of the temple. It will be found again in Scotland and England when men will begin to cleanse the house of God.

If the Lord will have mercy on your soul, it will be with you as it was with Hilkiah. You will have to say, "I have found the Word of God." This book was brought before the king, and he rent his clothes. If you found this Word, you did like Josiah, you looked back upon your way in the valley and rent your clothes. Josiah then gathered the elders, and they decided that all the people, small and great, should be gathered into the purified temple. Why was this decided on? In order that the king might read it to the people. How beautiful! Had there been plenty copies of it, he would have handed one to all the young. But is this what our rulers have done to the young? Alas, no. They have taken the Scriptures out of their educational code. Is it not tolerated in the schools? Yes. But it has no fixed standing place in our public training system. A minister told us that once at the end of an examination he proceeded to conclude with prayer, but the inspector tried to stop him. He shook him off and prayed. When he was done, the inspector asked him, "What have you now done? You have made me break the law."

The late Dr Wylie, who was a keen observer of how the nation was forsaking the Lord, mentions in his writings that a certain statesman said that there was a large tree with three branches which would require to be cut down before any good could come to the nation. The tree was "Protestant ascendancy," and two of its branches were (first) the place the Bible had in the schools, and (second) the establishment of the Protestant religion. These branches were to be cut down, not simultaneously, but one at a time. So the first was attacked, and the Bible was put out of the schools. This branch was cut off. Is this from God or from Satan?

The Bible is only tolerated or suffered to be in a corner—will the Lord not take vengeance on such a nation as this? Men are now busy sawing at the second branch, but have not sawn it yet. When the first branch was being hewn off, ministers of the gospel went hand in hand with the ungodly. “If you cannot tear the Bible out of the children’s hands we will help you.” I knew a godly minister who had a hand in this work. When, after the change, he went to examine a school and found ignorance, where once on a time he would find intelligent acquaintance with the Scriptures, he sat down and wept at the fruit of the policy he had supported.

What a black cloud overhangs this nation, now that the Bible is out of the hands of the children! What has been given in its place? Vain songs instead of the psalms of David are sung by the children. But Josiah went into a covenant along with the whole of the people. We endeavoured to do the same in our day—we entered a bond that we would have nothing to do with anything but the Word of God. Many cried out against this, and even ministers from the pulpits spoke of this evil. But what was the evil? Was it because, like Josiah and the people, we were going to follow the Lord according to His word, to keep His commandments and His testimonies, and His statutes, with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our might?

Application.—Those people whom we have been considering are long since in eternity. Several in everlasting happiness, others in everlasting misery. The kingdom of Judah has no existence among the nations of the world. To us the passage of Scripture we have been endeavouring to meditate upon speaks. It becomes us

then to ask, What is the state of our nation? What is the state of our Church? and what is the state of our souls? These are important questions, but they are questions which we must face now if we would, as responsible creatures, render our account with joy at the last day. And there is none of these questions but we are bound to consider whatever our station in society is.

(1) Then, what is the state of our nation? We as a nation have been, like Israel and Judah, highly favoured by the Lord. Has He not delivered us from the heathen idolatry under which our forefathers had been before the light of the Gospel shone on our land? Our forefathers worshipped all the hosts of heaven before the Lord in His sovereign mercy sent us His Word, and servants to show us the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. Has not this nation been constituted, through the power of the Gospel, a Christian kingdom, whose laws have been founded on the Word of God? Have we not entered into a solemn covenant with God that we would keep His commandments, His testimonies, and His statutes? What are we now? Just like Israel and Judah—covenant breakers, and trampling upon the laws of the Holy One of Israel. This nation is guilty of making new laws to profane the holy Sabbath of God, and other commandments, which they vowed to keep. The surest way of pulling down a house is to undermine the foundation. The law of God is the foundation on which our kingdom has been established; and when we see the rulers of the nation doing all in their power to undermine that foundation, we may expect that the superstructure will fall. Unless we as a nation return to the law of the Lord, as sure as the kingdom of Israel and Judah fell, we shall fall. The Bible has been the means of making the British Empire

so great and powerful. The same book will make it small and weak, if national repentance prevent not.

(2) What is the state of our Church? I do not mean by the Church any one branch of the visible Church, but the visible Church as a whole, and especially the several branches of it in our own kingdom. We are interested in the cause of God throughout the world, but we must begin at home. Unless we are right at home little good can we do abroad. Then what is the state of the several branches of the Church in our nation? The state of any Church may be known by the place the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God have in its teaching. Now it is evident that in many denominations these important doctrines have not the same place in their teaching which they once had. Are the doctrines concerning the state of man by nature, as dead in trespasses and sins, the vicarious death of Christ in the room of His people, the work of the Holy Spirit in applying redemption, justification by faith through the righteousness of Christ alone, the final perseverance of the saints and the electing love of God from which all covenant blessings flow, are these doctrines held forth on the banner the Churches set up before the people? And what also of the infallibility and inspiration of the Scriptures as the Word of the living God? On the contrary, these are denied, and men are following on almost every hand Popish and Rationalistic doctrines and tenets. "Remove not the old landmark: and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: for their redeemer is mighty: he shall plead their cause with thee" (Prov. xxiii. 10, 11).

(3) What is the state of our souls? "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his

soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" He that knew the value of the soul put this question to show how trifling all earthly things would appear when the soul is lost. Man's soul by nature is full of corruption and idolatry, and requires to be inwardly purged and renewed by the Holy Ghost. Let us ask ourselves seriously and in the sight of God, has this change taken place in us? If so, all shall be well at last. If not, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

III.

ZERUBBABEL'S ENCOURAGEMENT.

“ Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work; for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts.”—Haggai ii. 4.

WE have here a word of encouragement sent to the Jews when they were building the temple after their return from captivity. We shall, in the few remarks which we intend to make, notice four things.

I.—The need there was for encouragement.

II.—Those to whom the encouragement was sent:

“ Zerubbabel and Joshua and all the people of the land.”

III.—The encouragement itself: “ Be strong, for I am with you.”

IV.—The duty enjoined on the people thus encouraged: “ Be strong and work, saith the Lord.”

They received this encouragement in order that they might not be idle, but might be up and doing, doing the work of the Lord. We also need encouragement in our day in the work of the Lord. We are now on the last day of the feast about to separate, and each and all of us ought to be engaged according to our abilities in doing something for the Lord, and if we are stirred up by His Spirit to do His work, there is no doubt this word will encourage us as sure as it did the Jews.

I.—The need there was of the encouragement given. They had great need of being encouraged when they had so many discouragements, and we shall notice a few of these. No sooner these people returned from Babylon than they set their hearts on the work of the Lord—you remember it was because of their neglect of that work they were sent into captivity, and they learned a lesson during their long captivity—no sooner, then, the Lord returned their captivity than they began first to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and thus we read that the foundation of the temple, which was destroyed and reduced to ashes by the enemy, was laid, and that they were purposing to continue to build on that foundation, to carry on that good work which they had begun. But Satan was, you may be sure, very much displeased when he saw the people upon whom he prevailed so to provoke the Lord as to send them into captivity, setting their hands again to the work of the Lord. Had they begun to worship the idols for which the Lord chastised them he would have let them alone, but when he sees any putting their hand to the work of the Lord, he is sure to make every opposition in his power. Satan is a spirit and a creature, and there is no doubt as a spirit he does a great deal of evil inasmuch as he has access to the spirit of man. But he cannot oppose the work of God in every way and every manner as a spirit, and therefore he uses men, and he uses those that are likely to be the more successful in opposing the work of the Lord. In this instance he uses the governor that was sent by the king of Babylon to Samaria, and his servant, Tobias. It is thus the children of the world are wise in their own generation. There is something that cannot be called wisdom, but which is like it in the Prince of Darkness.

He knows very well what instruments to use when he begins to combat against an individual soul, or a church, or a nation. He knows very well what instruments are more likely to be successful in doing his work. The first thing that discouraged the Jews was this, that they were opposed in the good work in which they were engaged. This reached their hearts, and this is the first thing that discouraged them. And by whom was the opposition made? It was made by the Samaritans, with the governor Sanballat at their head. Who were the Samaritans? They were a mixed people. They were neither purely Jews nor purely Gentiles. They were made up of both. If you read at your leisure the fourth chapter of Ezra you will find that they were a people whom, when the Jews were removed from their own land, the king of Babylon brought from his own kingdom to plant in their place. All the Jews were not taken to Babylon: there were some left, and the children of these Gentiles and Jews were the Samaritans. Samaria was the chief town of the ten tribes, as Jerusalem was the capital of Judea. These people then, of a mixed race, the children of Jews and Gentiles, dwelt in Samaria, and offered the first opposition to the re-building of the temple. Observe what method they took. They came forward first, when they saw the Jews beginning to build the temple and to engage in the service of God, and they offered to unite with them and to co-operate with them. Well, some might think that it was a very unwise thing of the Jews in their weak condition to refuse the co-operation of the Samaritans. But they did refuse it. And these Samaritans, when they came forward and offered to co-operate with the Jews, used the argument that they served the same God as the Jews, and that for

a long time, since they were taken by their king from Babylon. This then was an argument they used. But the Jews were justified in refusing to have anything to do with them in building the temple, and why? It was true, no doubt, that they to some extent (at least outwardly) worshipped the same God as the Jews did, but they were idolaters at the same time, and the Jews learned before they came out of captivity to say, by sad experience, "What have we any more to do with idols?" They knew very well that if they accepted the offer made by the Samaritans, who worshipped idols as well as the living God, they would be soon again sent back into captivity. Well, when the Samaritans saw that they were refused, they made it evident that they were not worthy of being entrusted to do anything in such a solemn work as the work of God. They showed that they were enemies. When they saw that they were refused they began to do everything in their power to discourage the hearts and to weaken the hands of the Jews in building the temple. That is what they did, and it proved that they had no love for the work of God, but because they saw that the Jews were doing a great work, and were doing it by the authority of King Cyrus, they wanted, from some motive or other, to have a hand in that work. When they saw that they were refused, they used various means to put a stop to the building of the temple. Oh! what was the meaning of this? A people seemingly so eager and so desirous of building the temple, and yet when they saw that their offer was rejected, they tried to put a stop to the building of the house of God. They showed the very spirit that Cain manifested when he found that the sacrifice which he offered up to God was rejected, and he found himself

personally and his services rejected by the Lord. Had they been the true people of God, even although they were rejected, they would try to do in a separate position what they could to encourage the work of God in the world. Well, they used various means to put a stop to it, and they succeeded in putting a stop for a time to the building of the temple. They complained of the Jews, as you may see in the fourth chapter of Ezra and the fourth chapter of Nehemiah. They reported in high quarters that the Jews were a rebellious people, and that they now showed their rebellion in the work in which they were engaged. They not only sent complaints to high quarters to provoke the king so as to command that the work should be stopped, but they also mocked these people. Ah! such is the spirit of those who are not sincere, notwithstanding their professions. That which they cannot bring to pass by power they try by mocking. They begin to mock the work of the Lord. I am not going to dwell upon this, but simply to mention it to show that this was a great discouragement to those who were stirred up to begin such a glorious work as the building of the house of the Lord. We may mention also, before we begin to proceed, that there is a great cry in this age for union. Well, here was a proposal for union. The Samaritans came forward and offered to unite with the Jews, and they used as an argument: "We serve the same God, but with us you will be stronger." Not at all; you will be weaker. It is a good thing, my friends, when the cause of God is prosperous, and when the Spirit of God is poured down upon the people from on high, and when the kingdom of God is enlarged in the world, it is a good thing then to have union, and I believe when the Millennium will come

there shall be union. I mean by union that there shall be only one denomination. You ask what denomination it shall be. Well, I am prepared to tell you that, and when I do tell it I don't guess, I just tell it from the Word of God; it will be the denomination which the apostles left in the world, and that is—Presbyterianism. The apostle Peter, writing to the elders, says, "Who am also an elder" (a presbyter). There will be union, my friends, when the Millennium comes. There will be a union, a glorious union, in the course of a hundred years hence, but it is too soon yet. It is a good thing for the people of God to be united, and for those who profess the Christian religion to be united in the truth, but there are times when God sees that instead of there being one denomination in the world there should be more than one. Yea, He commands divisions at certain times. How is this? Well, I have been thinking about it. I think it was a wise thing of Jacob, when returning from Padan-aram to meet his brother Esau, to divide his one company into two: and why? "Lo," he says, "if he whom I fear smite one company, the other shall escape." And as, my friends, that was of the wisdom of a creature in that way and in that instance, so it is of the infinite wisdom of God that sometimes instead of there being one denomination there are more. Why? When the devil shall attack one denomination with errors of various kinds to overthrow the cause of God, another denomination shall escape. You will find that this was the way in which the truth of God was preserved in past ages. It was not by one great denomination where all were united together, but by little companies that were set apart, just as Jacob divided his company. In this back-sliding age there is a cry for union. Ah! union in error is

an awful thing. Union in the truth is a glorious thing. I mention this in connection with the proposal that the Samaritans made here to the Jews to unite with them in carrying on the work of the Lord.

There was another thing that discouraged them, and what was it? The Lord rebuked them for neglecting to carry on the work which they had begun. We see, in the first chapter, that a stop was put to the building of the temple, that the Jews were forced to stop it for a time, yea, for a long time, perhaps fifteen or sixteen years. Well, that was a long time for the work of the Lord to stand still, and we may be sure, my friends, that this would be a hard thing for any that had the work of God at heart, unless they were in a back-sliding state. When they saw that a stop was put to the work, and that one year passed and another year passed, they came to the conclusion in their own minds, a conclusion to which they had no warrant to come to from the Word of the Lord, "Certain things are going against us, and it appears this is a sign that the time has not yet come to build the temple." Here the Lord rebukes them. He sends His prophet Haggai to rebuke them. "Then came the word of the Lord, by Haggai, the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?" The Lord reminded them that they made careful provision for worldly matters, and that they ought to be as careful about spiritual matters and the work of the Lord. "Is it time for you to dwell in your ceiled houses?" Ye have built your own houses. They had got indifferent about the house of the Lord. So do sinners in regard to the salvation of their souls. How many, my friends, how

many, young people especially, delay in this way. "The time has not yet come for me to seek the Lord. I am too young yet." But the Lord comes with this rebuke to you, my friend, and He says, "Is this a time for you then to attend to worldly matters and mislay the most important matter in that way? Is this a time for you to attend to the comforts of your body to the neglect of your soul? Is it a time for you to attend to the things that concern this life, and neglect the great salvation?" "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Ah! my friends, there is teaching here for all. God rebukes the Jews for their backwardness in His works, for the conclusions which they drew from the opposition made to them, and for the stop they allowed to be put to the work of the Lord. They said, "The time has not yet come to build the house of the Lord." Now is the accepted time for us, and now is the day of salvation. To-day, to-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation. We know not what a day may bring forth. We are now in the land of mercy, in the land of the living. We are now where the arms of a mighty Saviour are stretched forth to receive us even although we be the chief of sinners. But to-morrow we may be as naked spirits before the great Judge, and to whom then shall all these worldly goods belong? Yea, it was said to another, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee." That man had no time to attend to the concerns of his soul, and yet he was very active in thoughts and in actions regarding the things of this world, but God called him a fool, and told him that very night his soul should be required of him. This was then the rebuke, and they profited by it, for it is said that "the people did fear before the Lord."

There was a third thing that discouraged them, and this is spoken of too by the prophet in the second chapter. "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory, and how do ye see it now? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" They thought that, although they should be allowed to build the house, it would be as nothing in comparison with the great and glorious temple built by Solomon. The Lord spoke their thoughts and their minds when He said, "Is it not in your eyes as nothing?" Not only their enemies said it was a poor thing, but even they themselves, and especially those of them that saw the first temple. There were some of the people who had been taken in their youth to Babylon, and who remembered the glory of the first temple. When the foundation of the second temple was laid these were weeping, while the others, who never saw the great temple that Solomon built, were rejoicing, so that the noise of joy and the noise of sorrow could not be distinguished. There were those who wept and those who rejoiced. It is naturally discouraging to the Lord's people to think of the great days that are past, when the Lord's people were many in gospel lands, when there were many gospel ministers, many godly men and women, many godly young and old, and to observe now to what extent the Lord has left the earth. He still calls one here and there, "one of a city and two of a family," yet is it not a thing that discourages the true people of God when they think of the great days that are past? But, my friends, we must not despise the work of the Lord however small it is. We should indeed seek to see more of it, seek that Christ should increase more and more, but we ought not to despise the day of small things. The

people here who were discouraged by the thought of the littleness of the second temple compared with the first were greatly mistaken. The Lord told them there was no reason for this discouragement at all. This was the third thing. "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory, and how do ye see it now? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" Well, these were some of the things that discouraged the Jews, and called for a word of encouragement from the Lord. "Yet," notwithstanding all these things, "now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest: and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work; for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts."

II.—Those to whom the encouragement was sent. Who were they? Some of them are mentioned by name, others are mentioned as "all the people of the land." Zerubbabel was governor of Judea, and it was a mercy from the Lord that when a heathen king granted them liberty to return to their own land they were not to be governed by Sanballat, no, but by one of themselves. You see, the Lord has the hearts of kings and of peoples in His hand, and when He turns the captivity of His church in any age, He will show favour in various ways; and this was one of the favours which He gave the Jews, that He set over them not a Sanballat nor a heathen governor, but Zerubbabel, one of themselves. Upon Zerubbabel lay the burden, at least outwardly, of the government of the cause of God's church. He was not a king but a governor under Darius himself and those that succeeded him. Upon Joshua, the high priest, lay the burden and the responsibility of the service of God. It

says a great deal for the governor of the Jews and for the high priest that they are mentioned by name here. What are we to learn by this, that they are thus mentioned? That, as they got such responsible work, so they must have felt grieved more than others that the enemies had put a stop to the work of the Lord. This should be so. When the cause is opposed in any land all the children of God must feel it, but ministers of the gospel should feel it more. Paul says, "Brethren, pray for us." Speaking of his own troubles he says, "Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." Now, I say it should be so, that the public servants of the church should bear the weight and the burden of God's cause more than others. I say, if you are a believer you feel wounded in heart when you hear that anything is done to discourage the work of the Lord, but I say also that the ministers of Christ must be more grieved than you. And it should be so. It should be so according to the responsibility of the calling in which they are: they must feel it more than others. I was thinking that these two represent the public ministers and governors of the church of Christ. They represent those who ought to bear more of the burden of the Lord than others. I was thinking these two were mentioned by name just for the same reason that Christ mentioned the name of Peter when sending the message to tell He was risen from the dead. "Tell the disciples," said He. Well, Peter was a disciple. "Tell the disciples and Peter that I am risen." Why was Peter mentioned? Ah! Peter had greater need of hearing about the Saviour than the rest of the disciples. He was more cast down: he had denied

Christ. He was grieved in heart, and it was not an ordinary message that would raise him up who was so much bowed down, and so, although the message was for him in common with all the disciples, there is a special message sent to himself. "And all the people of the land." Not only are Zerubbabel and Joshua mentioned, but also "all the people of the land." By "all the people of the land" here, we are to understand those mentioned in the first chapter and twelfth verse. After the prophet had given the message, and after they were called to consider their ways and the dealings of the Lord with them in providence, "Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the Lord." They took to heart the message of the Lord. There were other people in the land, such as the Samaritans, but by "all the people" is meant those who took an interest in the building of the temple, and whose spirits were stirred up to do what they could to advance the good work that they had begun. This message or word of comfort to them is also sent to all those who take to heart the word of the Lord, and who are stirred up from their indifference to do something that souls might be saved and that Christ might be glorified, that His kingdom might come, that sinners might be converted, and that the people of God might grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If your heart has been stirred up by the Spirit of God in this back-sliding age—so as to engage in the work of the Lord, to be fervent in spirit at the throne of grace, and doing what your hand

finds to do that Christ might be glorified, that His kingdom should come, and that the testimony for the truth might be left to coming generations—this word of encouragement is sent to you as sure as it was sent to Zerubbabel and Joshua, and all the people of the land. It was not sent to any but those who needed it. “They that are whole need not a physician.” The Lord never applies the balm to a whole skin; He never binds up a whole heart. He binds up the heart that is broken, and He never sends a word of comfort but in time of need. There are threatenings in the Word of God, and there are promises, and there are encouragements—all these are dispensed by Him whose they are. “Strengthen the weak hands, confirm the feeble knees: say to them that are of a fearful heart, ‘Be strong.’” This word of comfort is sent to you who feel discouraged at every opposition made to the work of the Lord, or to the souls of God’s people whom you know, or to His cause in the world. Even in the most distant parts of the world, if you are a living stone in the building, if you are a living member in the mystical body of Christ, when one member suffers you sympathise with that member, you suffer with him; when one member rejoices you rejoice, and when one is honoured you feel happy with that member. Ah! my friends, God’s people—members of Christ’s mystical body—are not like a wooden leg in a man’s body. You see, a wooden leg may appear to be a part of the body, but really it is not; it has no sympathy with the body. Those who are merely nominal Christians, nominally the people of God, they are just like a wooden leg which cannot sympathise with the body, which cannot feel although you were to pierce it with the sharpest instrument.

III.—Well, the encouragement now ; and what is the encouragement ? I mentioned before that it is according to the need that the Lord speaks in comforting. It was to those who needed it that Christ Jesus said, “ Let not your hearts be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions.” Every part, then, of the encouragement is to meet every part of the discouragement. What is the first part ? First, “ Be strong, for I am with you.” What does that mean ? What is that intended to remove ? O it is this : there were many against them. Sanballat was against them, the people and their governor were against them, so God says, “ Courage, for I am with you.” They might then say with Paul, “ If God be for us, who can be against us ?” Here it is—there are many against the Jews, trying to oppose them in the work of the Lord, but God comes forward now when they are found in the path of duty, and not when they are neglecting the work of God. Be not depressed : “ Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle ? I would go through them, I would burn them together.” What are all people in the world, what are men and what are devils, what are all enemies whatever if God be for us ? And God is true, God is for His people, He is with them, and He is with them especially when they are found in the path of duty doing His work. When they are neglecting that duty He rebukes them, as He sent His word to rebuke the Jews by the prophet Haggai : “ Is it a time for you to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste ?” Here is a word of rebuke ; God does not deal always in the same way with His people. No, but He comforts them in a time of need, when they are faint and sorrowful, when their hearts are cast down. “ Why art thou

cast down, O my soul?" said the psalmist, "what should discourage thee?" It is when their soul is cast down within them, it is then the Lord will come forward, and He suits the promise to their very case. "If men are against you," He says, "I am with you." Now, my friends, every time the church, the work of the Lord, the temple of the Lord is being built up, there are men who are against those engaged in the work of the Lord. I do not mean to dwell upon this: I simply draw your attention to it in order that you may not be discouraged. When we, as a Church, took a stand in defence of the truth of God—for the benefit not only of our own souls and the present generation, but also of future generations—men rose up against us and they used the same means to weaken our hands and to discourage our hearts as the Samaritans of old did. If we wanted a house to worship God in, such as the public school, there were letters in the newspapers not to give it. Every effort was made to put a stop to the glorious work; to what may be called, on a small scale at least, the building up of the cause of God in Scotland. Ah, this work in which we are engaged is the building up of that cause and it may be needful that I should mention what a great and godly man, who is still living, said about it—a man whom some of you may know. Before any made a stand against error in the way in which we did he was looking with a sorrowful heart on the state of God's cause in Scotland. He was seeing almost all the churches departing from the principles and doctrines of the church of God, and he was seeing that the judgment of God was coming fast after this declension. Then his heart was cast down. But when he heard that there was a stand made he took courage, and said, "The judgment will not yet come,

but mark this," he said, "and some of you may see it, this is the last call to Scotland, the last call to Scotland, and if Scotland will not hearken to the call of God, then the judgment will not be delayed any longer, and some of you may see the judgment." We are encouraged, my friends, that there are some who have made a stand for the truth of God, whatever that may have cost them—even although it should have cost them what it cost others, the laying down of their lives. If lives are laid down for the cause of Christ, these lives will have a glorious resurrection. Ah! yes.

Well, my friends, this is the encouragement, then, that God speaks to your hearts who are interested in the cause of God. It is a suitable message to deliver to you, this last day of the feast, in the city of Glasgow—"Be strong, for I am with you." They had been rebuked, and this also led Him to say, "Be strong." The rebuke of the Lord had weakened them, and it ought to have had that effect, and it is a bad sign on any heart that is not weakened when the Lord rebukes. The psalmist says that they "perish at the rebuke of Thy countenance." "My flesh cleaves to my skin." And we may feel assured that there was great need for the encouragement, "Be strong," for it is said when God sent His word of rebuke to the people, for delaying the work of the Lord so long while attending to their own worldly matters, that they "perish at the rebuke of Thy countenance."

There was a third thing in the encouragement: and what was it? Well, it was something to meet the discouragement which they had from comparing the small effort they were now making with that which had been made in former days, from comparing the littleness of the house of God which they were endeavouring to build

with the glorious temple of Solomon. "Is it not," God says—and He brings out what they think themselves—"in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" What is the meaning of this? You see, the temple of Solomon was made glorious outwardly with such as silver and gold; almost everything was covered with silver and gold. It was a beautiful sight to the natural eye to behold the temple of Solomon, on every side to which one could turn covered with silver and gold. But now the Jews could not make this temple so great and glorious, so beautiful with silver and gold, and they were discouraged. If they had silver and gold they would naturally make up the second temple as beautiful as the first. And what does God say? "Mine is the silver and mine is the gold." What does He mean by that? Well, what I once thought of it was that, as they needed silver and gold to build the temple, the Lord was encouraging them to look to Himself for these things; but I changed my mind, and I think I saw that this was not the meaning at all, and that the meaning was—"I am as wealthy now as I was in the days of Solomon. The earth belongs unto the Lord, and all that it contains. Do you think I could not afford to give you as much silver and gold as I gave to Solomon? Mine is the silver and mine is the gold, but I withhold it on purpose, as I intend to make the second temple more glorious than the first." And so He says, "The glory of the latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts: in this place shall I give peace."

Now, my friends, you see this is the way He took to encourage them. They were discouraged because they could not make the second temple so beautiful with silver and gold as the first. But God said as much as: "I am

not at all become poor since the days of Solomon, but I withhold silver and gold which I gave liberally to Solomon from you on purpose, and my reason for withholding it is this, that I intend to make the second house more glorious with another gold, with the gold tried in the fire." "The glory of the latter house shall be greater." Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of His Father's glory and the express image of His person, was to come into the world and to assume human nature; He was to come into the world before the destruction of that second temple. We read, indeed, that there was a place in Solomon's temple where the presence and the glory of God were so much revealed that the ministers doing the service of God could not proceed with the weight of the glory of it. Even that, my friends, was only a manifestation of the glory of God, but here is God Himself, God manifest in the flesh, He who is the brightness of the Father's glory, He came to the temple. This was the way, then, He took to encourage them, in renewing the promise of Him who was promised early in the history of the world, Jesus Christ.

Now, my friends, the glory of any church is this—not silver and gold and wealth, but that Jesus Christ should come to that church. It was said at one time, "The glory is departed," and the glory is departed from any church where the Son of God is not, where His presence is not, where the Gospel in purity is not preached, where the doctrines concerning Jesus Christ and the salvation He wrought out are not held forth. That church has lost its glory. Oh! let us seek, my friends, to embellish and beautify our church, not with outward pomp and glory, but with Christ. Let us seek that Jesus Christ may be with us. Let us look to Him,

let us cry to Him, and, when He does come, let us pray with the disciples who met Him on the way—"Abide with us, for it is toward evening and the day is far spent." The presence of Christ is the glory of any soul, the glory of any church, the glory of any community, the glory of any kingdom. "And His glory shall fill the whole earth." There is another thing that is the glory of a church (I mentioned it incidentally already), the truth of God. "The glory of the latter house shall be greater," because Jesus Himself was to come there. Well, the glory of any church is this, that the truth of God be in that church. That is the glory of a church. Oh! let us seek, then, that our church may be beautified. The Lord says to us, "Mine is the silver and mine is the gold," and, although we cannot show any such splendour as the temple of Solomon or the Free Church of old, we can, my friends, oh, we can be content if our church is beautified with the presence of Him who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and with His truth. I may mention in connection with this that the Free Church of old, like the old temple built by Solomon, was beautified outwardly with silver and gold. The Free Church grew very rich, and she was not the better of that. We, for our part, do not regret that Sir William Mackinnon did not leave us thousands of pounds to carry on the work of the Lord, though it seemed a loss that he was taken away so suddenly before he cast in his lot with us, which he promised to do had he lived. But I thought it was a providence, arranged by the wisdom of Him who is infinite in wisdom, that he did not leave us a single penny. Had he left us thousands of pounds, another disruption would have been necessary in a few years. Why? Because we would have many ministers following

us, not for the sake of principle. We went forth and said, with the great Master to the man who would follow Him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." "Will you follow me now?" Ah! no. It was a blessing from Him whose cause we have at heart, it was a blessing from the Lord that not a penny was left us by that worthy man, or, as I said before, in the course of a few years we would require to have another disruption. Here is the way that the Lord deals with us. It is a time of trial, and we must follow the Lord simply because He is worthy of being followed. We must stand up for the truth's sake, not from any worldly motives nor for any worldly profit. The truth is a great treasure, and those who will not defend the truth for the truth's sake are not worth being named Christians at all. Oh! how miserable we would be, my friends, if we had not the truth, or if we had the truth of God mixed with errors, as almost all other churches have. Could we have true happiness? What is the value of anything unless we enjoy happiness in connection with the cause of God in the world, unless we acquit ourselves like those who have to render an account, and who wish to render that account with joy? We, my friends, profess to be the servants of the Lord, and what is the worth of a servant unless he is faithful to his master? If a man in this city of Glasgow had a large warehouse and employed servants, and if any of these servants allowed robbers and thieves to come in and steal his goods, was that servant faithful to his master? I say, No. And is a minister of Christ not to be more faithful than a servant in a warehouse? We must render an account. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" to render

our account. If you seek happiness of soul, peace of soul, in passing through this world, seek not only to be found in Christ but also to be faithful to Christ, and keep from turning to the right hand or to the left. Oh! this is our duty, and when we do this we shall have to acknowledge (even if we could do all our duty) that we have not done but what was our duty. But instead of doing all our duty, how much is left undone! What shame and confusion of face belong to us! What thankfulness to God that it is not on anything we may try to do our salvation depends, but on what Christ did! His work is perfect. His work is the foundation upon which God's people build. Still, although our salvation does not depend upon our endeavours, if we are unfaithful to God, and if we miss an opportunity of doing good, that must make us uncomfortable on a dying bed. Ah! yes. Although you should get to heaven, there would never be again for ever an opportunity for you to do good to anyone in this world, to warn your friend or your foe, to warn any "to flee from the wrath to come." You could not come back again to the world to do anything for God. No.

IV. The last thing is this, the duty now enjoined. Let us take it to heart, let each of us carry it with us. The duty enjoined is, "Be strong and work." The work was the work of the Lord; they were building the temple. They were asked to work, to proceed with the work, and in the records of the kings it was found that a decree was given and proclaimed by Cyrus that the work was to proceed. And so, my friends, the enemies were confounded, and the poor people of God were encouraged to proceed again with the work which had been so long delayed. Let us seek grace, that we may do whatever

our hands find to do. If you can do nothing more, oh, pray for those who are trying to do public work for God. Encourage them in every way, and do whatever your hand finds to do. We are all going on to another world. There is no knowledge or device in the grave, to which we are all hastening. Let us—not only those whose duty it is to proclaim in public the truth of God, but let us all—try to do everything we can to put down evil. There is much work for all true Christians in this age, and in this city, in various ways, where iniquity abounds, and where errors abound. Let us raise our voice against them. One may say, “What is the use; there is such power against us?” Did you not read the promise, “I am with you”? Let it not weaken your hands, nor keep you back from doing your duty, that there is such power against you. Do you your own duty, and God will be with you.

IV.

THE LORD'S HOUSE ESTABLISHED.

“ But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”—Micah iv. 1, 2.

THE preceding chapter closes with a gloomy view of the Church. Zion was to be plowed as a field: Jerusalem was to become heaps; and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest. There was to be a desolation; and the prophet tells the procuring cause of this desolation, namely, the sins of the people, and the sin of idolatry in particular. The priests and the princes—the leaders of the people—led them astray and made them to err. It is observable that in every time of declension in the Church, the evil begins with the teachers, whether they be prophets or priests. And as a rule the practice of the people will be according to the teaching they receive; and here the teaching and the practice were sinful. But the Lord threatened the people for their sins, and He threatened in particular the leaders of the people. The people were to be deprived of seers or prophets. “ Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision: and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine: and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them. Then

shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded : yea, they shall all cover ther lips, for there is no answer of God.”

The leaders of the people professed to build up Zion, but it was in the wrong way—it was by blood, by persecuting to death those who would not comply with their own corrupt teaching. This is always the case when there is a great forsaking of the faith, and those persecuted are God’s people. Such are persecuted because they will not turn from the truth to believe a lie. It is no new thing. History repeats itself. It was the case in the days of Micah, and for the sake of these false teachers Zion was to be ploughed, Jerusalem to become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.

But is not God to have a Church in the world? Is it to become extinct? No. Although He punishes people for their sins, and although the Church is brought low because of them, yet the Lord will have a Church in the earth. He destroyed the old world, and swept off from the face of the earth the workers of iniquity—almost all that generation except eight persons—but He provided for His Church; He raised up Zion again. The chapter in which we have our text begins with a “But,” indicating that better things were to take place. In endeavouring to speak from these words, as the Lord may enable me, I shall direct your attention to three things:—

I.—The Church as it is spoken of here—as the mountain of the house of the Lord.

II.—The promise concerning the Church.

III.—The means to accomplish the promise.

I.—The Church is spoken of here under the emblem of a mountain. You know it was on a mountain that the temple was built by Solomon—Mount Zion; and not only that, the Old Testament Church is sometimes called in Scripture a mountain. The New Testament Church is also so called, as you find the Apostle Paul saying in Hebrews xii. 18, “For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched . . . but ye are come unto Mount Zion.” Now this term “mountain,” as applied to the Church of God, is suggestive of several things.

It suggests, first, to our mind the idea of *creation*. A mountain is the work of God. Man can do many things, but he cannot create a mountain. He cannot create the least atom of matter. When you see a house, you know that it was built by man; but when you see a mountain, you say instinctively, within yourself, “This is the work of God,” though there are indeed many who deny God Himself; and when they see a mountain, never think of it as the work of God. Well, as a mountain is part of the creation of God, so is the Church, whether we take the Church to mean the members of the Church or the outward organization thereof, the means of grace, and the ordinances of God’s house. We find believers themselves acknowledging this: “We are His workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works.” Believers, then, who are true members of the Church, are created by God, who created the whole world. Man cannot change himself in a saving way: that is the work of God. And God creates them anew in Christ Jesus by the effectual working of His Spirit through the Word. Christ taught the necessity of this change to Nicodemus: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” As a mountain is the creation

of God, so are the means of grace and the ordinances of His house. They are not the invention of man, but they have been divinely appointed, and they are, we may say, His creation, for before He instituted them they had no existence. God gave existence to them, and set them up in His Church, and such things as have no divine authority—the inventions of men—do not belong to the Church of God at all. People are better without them, and they should have no place in the worship of God.

The second idea suggested by a mountain is *stability* and *durability*. A mountain is a stable, firm, and lasting thing, and so we read of “the everlasting hills.” Not that any hills are, in the absolute sense, everlasting, but, relatively, they stand firm and sure from the creation till this earth shall be destroyed. In the midst of all the changes that have taken place during past ages, there is no change on the mountains. Many generations have passed from time to eternity, but the present generation looks at the very same mountains and hills that the first generation in the world saw. The Church, however, is more stable than the “everlasting hills”: for “the mountains shall depart and the hills shall be removed,” but the Church built on the Rock Christ shall not be overthrown or removed. The foundation of the Church was laid in the divine purpose before the foundation of the world, and it is more durable than the mountains. Notwithstanding all the efforts made by enemies to throw it off its foundation, the Church is still in the world, and that is a great wonder; but all the works of God are works of wonder. Satan and all his hosts are unable to overthrow the Church of God: “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” No man ever thought of going to Ben Wyvis with the intention of throwing it off its

foundations; it would be madness to think of such a thing, for it is impossible; and yet many try to put their shoulders to the Church of God to overthrow it, but even the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. This is an encouragement to God's people in all ages: the Church cannot be overthrown by the power of enemies, however strong and however numerous they may be. Greater is He that is with the Church than all they that be against it. This is as true to-day as it was in the past, and we ought to derive comfort from it, if we take upon ourselves the burden of Christ's cause, and we cannot but take that burden upon us, because God laid it on our shoulders, and we dare not throw it off till He takes it off Himself, and that may not be long in the case of some. If saved, it would be better to be taken away from this burden in an evil age. I was at one time so concerned about the declension of the Church, and the evils that were coming in upon her, that I was desirous, if prepared, that God would take me home; but I was rebuked for that, and was made to see that such a desire was selfish, and arose from a desire for self-preservation, and not from a desire for His glory; and from that day I have been endeavouring to say, "Thy will be done." I would not like to go from the midst of trouble to the rest of heaven merely to escape my share of the afflictions of the Church.

Another idea suggested by the term mountain is *visibility*. The Church is a visible institution. Many lesser objects may escape your view when travelling through the country, but you cannot avoid seeing a mountain, if you have eyes to see. The Church is like a mountain that rises high and must be seen; and so Christ

says to His disciples that they are like a city built upon a hill that cannot be hid. The Church means both God's people and those institutions which He has set up in it. There is a Church that claims visibility, but it is not like a city set upon a hill, for they do most of their work in secret, and that is a bad sign. There is nothing in the Church of God that requires to be hid. Everything in it stands the light of day; and everything in a Church that cannot stand the light of day belongs to the works of darkness. Remember this, my friends. For instance, in the Ritualistic section of the Protestant Church of England there are seven secret societies, and they try to hide everything they do from the sight of the world, and especially from Protestants. Why is that? Ah, my friends, it is because they do not belong to the visible Church of God. The true Church of God can stand the gaze of enemies as well as of friends; it can stand the light of day; it has nothing to hide; but a Church that has many things to hide belongs rather to the kingdom of darkness than to the true Church of God.

But although a mountain is visible, as a rule, yet sometimes it is made invisible by mist, and under that cloud of mist it is out of sight for a time, so that no creature can see it. And so it has sometimes been with the Church. It has sometimes been covered from view by the mist of error, and error has its degrees in the Church just as natural mist has its degrees. Sometimes only the top of the mountain is covered with mist, while the rest of it is quite visible. At other times the mist may descend half-way down the mountain. But occasionally you find the entire mountain covered with mist from top to base, so that it is entirely hid from view. So it is with the Church. For more than one thousand

years before the glorious Reformation of the sixteenth century the Church was covered from the very top to the bottom with the mist of error, and no mist is so injurious and so dangerous as the mist of error. You may walk many miles in a natural mist and be nothing the worse for it, but not so in the mist of error. It is hurtful and destructive to a high degree, and many have lost their souls in it. During that long period the light of the Bible was not seen. There was no such thing as family worship, or reading the Bible, at least in the Church. What, then? Fables and traditions of the elders, with superstitions of the heathen and Jewish ceremonies, made up all the teaching given during that long period to immortal souls. When the Reformers began to teach the people from the Bible the priests denounced them as heretics, and charged them with introducing innovations into the Church. What do you think of such false teachers of the people? To-day we see foolish people going with the stream—the stream that is flowing toward the dark ages again—and there are very few to warn them. Paul says, “Preach the word,” and if we do not preach the Scriptures to the people, we have nothing else to give them; but these priests said that it was the devil’s work to teach the people from the Scriptures, and instead of preaching Christ and His atoning sacrifice and forgiveness through His blood, they sent agents through the different countries of Europe with indulgences and promises to the people that, if they paid so much, all their sins would be forgiven—not only their past sins but their future sins—and they were promised God would not punish them! Was it not a fearful thing to be selling such things? Well, instead of this the Gospel began to be preached; and, as when the wind

blows, the mist covering the mountains is dispelled, so when the Holy Spirit blew upon the Church, through His own Word, the mist of error vanished away. Ah, my friends, what a blessing came to the countries of Europe at the Reformation when that mist was dispelled ! There is nothing that can dispel the lie but the truth. Though the mist covered the Church for so many years, yet the Church was not extinct. There still was a remnant in France, in Switzerland, and in other parts of the world. There was a witness for God left on the earth. When the mist vanishes, the same old mountain appears again, and so when the mist or error was dispelled the Church re-appeared in all its beauty.

Alas, that in our own day the mist should be coming down heavily upon the mountain of the house of the Lord. I am not going to say much upon this, but is the mist not coming down when in the Protestant Church of England there are 9,600 "priests" celebrating mass, hearing confession, and teaching all manner of Romish doctrines ? Again, Mr Walter Walsh, author of "The Secret History of the Oxford Movement," who searched into the matter, assures us that of the 300 clergymen in the Scottish Episcopal Church, no fewer than 250* are Romanisers ; and the way he came to know this was that he found their names as members of Romanising secret societies ! The late Bishop of Argyle and the Isles, who lived at Ballachulish, was a member of a Romanising society, and yet he pretended to be a Protestant. The way in which these Ritualists introduce the mass (they do not call it mass) is a very cunning one. They changed the hour of communion from the evening to the morning, as they knew people would not be fasting in the evening

* This was in 1894.

--and mass must be celebrated fasting. I have seen myself, in passing through the country, and even in the Highlands, a placard, "Holy Communion at 8 o'clock a.m.," placed outside the doors of Scottish Episcopal churches. Whenever I see that, I say to myself, "That is suspicious: I suspect that Church is a Roman Catholic Church": and I judge from the way they are going on in England. That is how they introduced the mass into the English Church. In the mass they profess to offer up Christ as a sacrifice, not only for the living, but also for the dead: that is, they profess to bring the dead out of purgatory; but, as there is no such place, they must mean hell, and they cannot take them out of hell. Now, I wish to impress this upon you, as I may not have the opportunity of warning you much longer. The intention of the Ritualists is to have the Protestant Churches united with the Romish Church, and so to bring these under the Papacy again. That is the aim. Take warning, my friends, the day may come, and little children here to-day may see it, if they live to be 40 years of age, or even less, when people will be put to death if they refuse to burn their Bibles, or if they refuse to kneel down before the image of the Virgin Mary to worship her. We are fast hurrying on to this. The King on the throne encourages it, and the Queen* is an idolatress. She has, we are told, images of the Virgin Mary and other saints in her room, and once a year, at least, she goes to make confession to a priest. Ah, my friends, that is what it has come to. Ah! take warning.

Another idea suggested by a mountain is *height*. The mountain is the highest part of the earth. God, in His infinite wisdom, saw it proper, in creating the world,

* The late Queen Alexandra.

that all the earth should not be of the same level. He ordained that some parts of the earth should be higher than other parts, and so He made hillocks and hills higher than the plains, and mountains highest of all. The Church, then, is the highest and most glorious institution that God has set up in the world. He has set up kingdoms and other powers, but the Church is above them all. I do not mean that in civil matters the Church is not to obey the civil magistrate, but in religious matters the Church is the highest institution in the world. The Church and the State have co-ordinate jurisdictions; the one is not to encroach on the other. The Roman Catholic Church, so far as they can carry that out, say that they are not subject to the law of the kingdom; that is, if a priest commits any crime, he claims the right of exemption from punishment. Is not that extraordinary? Well, that is the view we Protestants take of it. If a minister breaks the law of the kingdom, he is to be dealt with according to the law of the kingdom, and to be punished. We keep the rule of God's Word, while those who claim to be the only true Church do not accept God's Word as their rule at all.

Well, from the top of the mountain a more extensive view can be had than from the other parts of the earth. We see yearly a large number of people visiting the Highlands, who climb the high hills to get a more extensive view. What views, then, are to be had from the top of the mountain of the house of the Lord? You can see upwards, downwards, and around you. Looking upwards you can see to the third heaven; you can see within the vail; you can see God; you can see on His right hand Christ the Mediator, ever living to make intercession for His people; you can see the holy angels: you can see the

spirits of just men made perfect. You can see all these from the top of the mountain ; you cannot see them from the plain ground where the unconverted are. Looking *downwards*, how far can you see ? You can see to the lowest hell. You can see the old enemy, Satan, there ; you can see fallen angels there ; and you can see there the spirits of wicked men that died. You can see them there in hell. John Bunyan had a sight of hell, but you also may have a sight of hell if you come to the top of the mountain of the house of the Lord. Then, looking *around* you, what do you see ? You see the state of the human race in their sinful and lost condition ; “ for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” It is only in the Church you can see this—in the Church where God has given us the revelation of His Word. You remember that David was tempted on a certain occasion to envy the wicked because of their prosperity, but when he entered the sanctuary—or, in other words, when he ascended this mountain—he saw that their end was destruction, and then he ceased to envy them.

These ideas, then, are suggested to us by the term “ mountain,” but as it would keep you too long to take up the other heads, we must leave them till the evening or some future occasion, if the Lord will. May God bless His Word !

When speaking from these words in the afternoon we stopped at considering the height of the mountain and the views to be seen from the top of it. Before leaving this point I may say that one looking down from the top of this mountain will see the things of this world very small. Houses and castles, and other things that appeared so big to him when standing on the low ground, now appear to be very little indeed ; and men who looked

so great in the eyes of their fellows now appear to be just like little children. As this is true naturally, so it is true spiritually. Before conversion, and before ascending this mountain of the house of the Lord, the sinner looked upon this world as the greatest thing in existence; but now, being changed himself by the Spirit of God, he views things in the light of eternity and in the light of God's Word, and, like Paul, he counts all things loss—yea, he reckons them as dung—compared with the knowledge of Christ Jesus, his Lord. Before conversion he sought his happiness in the pleasures and amusements of this earth—labouring to draw happiness from broken cisterns which can hold no water; but now, being savingly changed, he views the pleasures of this life from the top of the mountain as nothing compared with the pleasures that the Holy Spirit imparts to his soul—the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. If you ask those who seek happiness in amusements—“innocent amusements” they call the theatre, concerts, and dances—why they do not give up such things, “Ah,” they will say, “we shall be dull and without happiness if we give up all our amusements.” That is their answer. But the Christian would not exchange his joy in the Lord for one moment for all the pleasures derived by the people of the world from their amusements. The Psalmist says:—

“ For in Thy courts one day excels
a thousand; rather in
My God's house will I keep a door
than dwell in tents of sin.”

I am not going to dwell upon this, but it gives pain to my heart—knowing the things of eternity and the preciousness of immortal souls—when I see and read of young

boys and girls, and even their fathers and mothers, going to the dance and to the theatre at our very doors.

II.—I now proceed to the second head, viz., the promise concerning the Church, and you will observe that this promise is twofold. It has respect (1) to what God promises to do concerning the Church itself, and (2) concerning the flowing of people and nations into the Church.

(1) Well, the promise as it relates to the Church itself is this—"It shall be established on the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills," and this was to take place "in the last days." Though God had a Church in the world during the Old Testament dispensation, yet it was not so established as not to give place to a Church in a new form, for you remember that the Apostle Paul quoted from Old Testament prophecy—"I will shake not the earth only, but the heavens also." Here the earth means the political state, and the heavens the ecclesiastical state; and Paul quotes this Scripture as an argument why the old dispensation should pass away to give place to the new. The Church state under the old economy was changed, but the Church state under the new is established in such a way that it shall never be moved till Christ comes to shake the heavens and the earth, and to judge the world. This was accomplished when the canon of Scripture was completed, and when the doctrines of the Church were fixed and the mode of worship settled; so that the state of the Church now, with regard to doctrine and mode of worship, is the best that can be on this side of glory. People who desire change in these matters ought to give good heed to this.

The Apostle Paul, in the same epistle to the Hebrews, brings forward another argument in the seventh chapter.

“The law,” that is, the ceremonial law, “made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did.” That is, the Gospel made things perfect. Perfection came not by the Levitical priesthood, but perfection came by the Priesthood of Christ. The sacrifice He offered up was perfect; the satisfaction He rendered to divine justice was perfect; and the mode of worship He has appointed in the New Testament Church is so perfect that it is finally fixed, established, and can never be removed to give place to a third dispensation. It is remarkable that any changes that are made by people in the way of worship are backward movements. The change from the Old Testament to the New Testament was a forward one. Why is it that, when people make any change at all, it is a change for the worse? Ah, just because it is impossible to improve upon the mode of worship and doctrine appointed by Christ, and any move from that must necessarily be a retrograde and not a progressive one. People ought to have their eyes opened. It is to be feared that this generation is blindfolded. They shut their eyes willingly, and do not try to think of spiritual things at all according to Scripture. They act like children. When changes are proposed people ought to ask themselves if what is proposed is a new thing, and if it ever existed in the world before. If people exercised their reason and knowledge in this way they would find that the so-called “new” ideas are nothing but a backward movement to modes and doctrines that existed during a previous dispensation which is abolished. Christ not only gives His people a spiritual understanding, but even in natural things God’s people are more intelligent than those that are still in a state of nature.

Well, then, it was promised that the Church should be rooted in the earth, and fixed in regard to doctrine and mode of worship. It was to be established on the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills. Not on the top of one mountain, as it was of old—on Mount Zion—but in Gospel times the Church was to be established on the top of all the mountains of the earth and exalted above all the hills. Mountains and hills are here spoken of figuratively. As mountains are greater than hills, so mountains here may mean kingdoms; and this means, as far as we understand it, that the kingdoms of the world shall give its proper place to the kingdom of Christ. Instead of lifting their heads above it and despising it, they now submit themselves willingly to the government of Christ, and give the highest place in their minds to the cause of Christ. Oh, what a glorious day! This is the promise, then, and faithful is He that promised, who also will perform. The promise is absolute. It does not say, “It may be,” or “It will be on such and such conditions.” No; there are no conditions or qualifications. It is an absolute promise, and as sure as God gave the promise it shall be fulfilled. The Church of Christ shall be acknowledged by all the kingdoms of this world, and they will consider themselves under the law of Christ and not above it. The great majority of the kingdoms of the earth have raised their heads above the cause of Christ, and despised it, and persecuted it; but ah! in the last days (and we are, in a sense, living already in the last days, which began when Christ rose from the dead, and shall continue till He comes again to judge the world) the promise is to be fulfilled concerning the mountain of the house of the Lord: Christianity will be embraced then not only by the mountains, or king-

doms, but also by the hills, or all other parts of the earth. All the kingdoms of the world shall be made the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The prophet Micah had to deliver this comforting message at a time when it was much needed. When the mountain of the house of the Lord was a ploughed field and made heaps and a desolation, Micah was commissioned by God to declare this message, and we declare it at second hand. It is not the less divine, it is not of less authority because we deliver it at second hand. It is the truth of God that never changes. The promise was far from being accomplished in the time of the prophet Micah, and although it is partially fulfilled in our day, yet it is far from being completely fulfilled : but it is our privilege to declare it ; and it is indeed a consolation to ourselves that there is such a promise in the Scriptures. As mountains may represent kingdoms, hills, which are less than mountains, may represent smaller communities, such as the inhabitants of our large cities. It cannot be said that there is a city in the world of which all the inhabitants have submitted to Christ and His government, and have given the place to His cause that it ought to have in their hearts. No doubt there are kingdoms and cities that *profess* to submit themselves to Christ's government, and one of our large cities, *i.e.*, Glasgow, adopted as its municipal motto, "Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the Word" ; and Glasgow did flourish. But now there is a change, and what do you think of the action of the Glasgow magistrates ? They held a meeting concerning the motto of their city, when it was proposed, put to the vote, and carried, that part of the motto should in future be dropped. That part was "by the preaching of the Word" ; so that the official

motto is now the bare "Let Glasgow flourish!" Ah! those councillors were very foolish, because, apart from God's Word, Glasgow will not flourish. This kingdom is nominally a Christian kingdom, but are we not coming again under the mist of error to which I referred in the earlier part of the day? Ah, my friends, those magistrates of Glasgow who dropped that part of the motto are the enemies of Christ, and Glasgow cannot prosper while they are opposing Him. There is the promise of this life and that which is to come given to godliness, and when people put off godliness there is no promise of prosperity. If you are made godly by God Himself, and cast all your cares upon Him for everything you require during your time in this world, depend upon it you will never lack; but those who cast off the fear and authority of God make themselves liable to be deprived of the temporal blessings they need during their time in this world. "Godliness is profitable in all things, having the promise of this life and that which is to come."

(2) The next part of the promise is the coming of people and nations into the Church. It begins thus:—"The people shall flow into it," and then "many nations shall come." That is the order. People first—perhaps the people of one nation—and then many nations, till all nations of the world shall flow into the Church. But, you say, "It is far from being so in this age, though the Gospel has been preached for nearly two thousand years now." Ah! but I have already pointed out that the promise was absolute and sure, and God will fulfil His own Word in His own time. But this is our time; we are passing on swiftly to eternity, and it is now that God is dealing with us with His Gospel, now He is inviting

us into His Church. Well, the manner they come is that they *flow*, and this implies that they come *willingly*. Not that by nature they are willing to come into the Church or to accept of Christ, but they shall be made willing in the day of God's power, as David says, "A willing people in Thy day of power shall come to Thee." None are willing by nature. Those taught of God found out that they would require to have their will renewed as well as their mind enlightened. An ancient heresy has been revived in our age—that man is willing to repent and to believe in Christ. One of these freewillers was arguing with me on the subject, and holding that man had perfect power of will to receive Christ, but I asked him how it was that although ministers were preaching the Gospel and pressing their fellow-sinners to believe in Christ, yet there are so few that do believe, and, of course, he could not answer. One argument these people have is that if you deny freewill you discourage the sinner to make any effort to be saved. But there are duties enjoined by God which do not mean that man is able by nature to obey any of the commands of God. We are commanded in Scripture to make us a new heart. Can we do that? No; but God means that we should go to Himself to work in us the new heart we need. The freewillers do not understand the Word of God at all. They twist Scripture to their own destruction. They ask, "Would God command so many duties if man were unable to obey?" But though man, by sin, lost his ability to obey, surely that does not mean that God lost His right to demand obedience! That is the manner in which the subject should be understood. A bankrupt cannot pay his creditors, but surely that does not mean that the demands of his creditors are unjust.

Well, the nations shall come willingly into the Church, and it is very likely that during the millennium this shall be fulfilled with respect to all the nations of the world. Comparatively few nations of the earth have received Christ yet, but during the millennium it will probably be true that all kings and queens of the earth shall be submissive to Him. With the probable exception of one sovereign, as far as we know, there is not a godly king or a godly queen in the world to-day, and the noble exception, we trust, is Gustavus of Sweden. Read his speech to his subjects. Ah! how different from the speeches of the other sovereigns and rulers of Europe, and how different from the speeches of our own king! Indeed, it ought to put us to shame to read such a speech that contains so much of the glorious Gospel. I think everyone should read that speech, and preserve it as a memorial of that king. It is to be found in a recent issue of the *English Churchman* or the *Protestant Observer*. It is more like a sermon from the pulpit by a Gospel minister than a speech from the throne by an earthly sovereign. Long may the Christian king of Sweden live!

There is only one mountain spoken of here, and as all nations shall flow into this one mountain, there shall only be one Church. Now we speak of many Churches. What has been the cause of so many denominations existing in the world? Just a departure from the one doctrine and mode of worship which God set up on earth. There are now many branches of the Christian Church, and so far as these adhere to the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, they are to be recognised as such; but there are other branches that, although holding by some doctrines about the person of Christ, and even about His

sacrifice, yet by their own inventions they overthrow these doctrines, and such cannot be called branches of the visible Church. If there be anything of the Word of God in such Churches, there may be individual Christians there; but so far as a testimony for the truth is concerned, we are assured by those who have made enquiry into the state of matters that, for example, the Episcopal Church of Scotland cannot be regarded as a branch of the visible Church, and yet we see people flocking to that Church.

We feel as Micah did in his own day. He had to testify against error, against the priests and the princes and the leaders of the people who were leading them astray. There is much need in our day of warning people against error. I do not see many being brought to Christ through my ministry, but I think I recognise that a great part of the work God has assigned to me is to warn people of the dangerous tendency of this age towards error in religion. I endeavour to show you the way of salvation, but I feel impelled to speak of the mist of error that is coming down upon us, not from any ill-will towards my fellow-creatures, but because of my love to God, to His truth, and to His cause, and of my desire that His kingdom should be advanced, and that the kingdom of Satan should be destroyed. For these reasons I speak so often of these errors.

When you go home you would do well to read the whole of the prophecy of Micah. It is not long, having but seven chapters, and on Sabbath night you will not be long in reading them. You will see how great are his denunciations of those things that destroy souls and that make desolate the Church of God, and then how he turns round to comfort the people of God by telling them what

great things God is to do for His Church in the last days. The people flow into it like water. You do not need to ask water to flow; it flows naturally and of its own accord quite freely, and this will be the case when the Spirit is poured out from on high, and when the Gospel is preached: sinners will be made willing, nations will be made willing, in the day of His power. A nation shall be born in one day! We would rejoice over one sinner repenting: yea, there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. But what joy will that be when a whole nation shall be born in one day? Not only do they come willingly, but they exhort one another, saying, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord." It is not of individuals merely, but of nations, that this is spoken. The nations will be exhorting one another. Britain will be exhorting France, France will be exhorting Italy, Italy will be exhorting Spain, and so on from one kingdom to another. No kingdom will refuse to comply with the exhortation. Ah, what a glorious day! This is promised, and the promise is sure, for God is faithful. We shall not see it, my friends, but in the midst of many discouragements we rejoice to proclaim this message in your ears.

We are told the object for which they come to the mountain of the house of the Lord. They come for instruction, and that not about the things of this life, but regarding the things of eternity—the things that belong to their peace. When the sinner is awakened he begins anew to attend the means of grace. He went before because others went, not because he felt his need; but when awakened he goes to church for the first time for instruction. Now his ears are open he will not lose a

word of what he hears; he watches all the time to see if there is any hope for such a sinner as he is. Well, my friends, it will not be one here and there throughout a kingdom of which this will be true, but it will be true of whole nations that they come for instruction. And who is the teacher? It is God. Not but that there will be men employed as His instruments. Ministers were never so numerous as they will be when this promise is fulfilled—"And they shall all be taught of God." It is not likely that there will be even one unconverted minister throughout the world during the millennium. And what is our warrant for that? Read the thirteenth chapter of Zechariah, about the man that was asked to act as a minister. He replies, "I am not a minister. I am an unconverted man. I will not take upon myself to preach. I am no prophet; I am a husbandman." In our day hundreds of unconverted men boldly come forward to the ministry, while those whom God Himself has chosen are often afraid to come forward to that holy office. Ministers are earthen vessels. It is God alone who supports them. The Psalmist says, "Were it not that I believed to see the goodness of the Lord, I would have fainted." Ministers are weak, earthen vessels, but when God speaks through them they are like the box that contained the ointment with which Mary anointed the head of Jesus. When it was broken "the house was filled with the odour of the ointment," and it is when God's messengers are broken in heart that the savour of the Gospel flows forth from the pulpit.

We will now observe the purpose for which they seek instruction. What do they purpose to do? They purpose, if God will teach them of His ways, through grace, to obey Him. "He will teach us of His ways and we

will walk in His paths." What a fine congregation that will be! How desirable for a minister to be ordained over such a congregation! He would be a happy man. He would find it easy to preach, and he would be supported by their prayers. If the fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, how much more the prayers of hundreds and thousands of God's praying people!

III.—The third thing in our text is the means to accomplish the promise, and what are the means? It is the gospel. "The law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The prophecy looked forward to New Testament times, and to the times in which the gospel was to go forth among all the nations after the middle wall of partition had been broken down by the death of Christ. It began at Jerusalem, but it did not stop there. The field was the world: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." "Make disciples," Christ said, "of all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." So that Christ's commandment was to be the rule of preaching and the rule of obedience: and what was not done in accordance with that rule was not acceptable to God. Nothing should be done in the worship of God that is not in accordance with that rule. At the time of the Reformation there were many efforts made to put down that glorious movement by the enemies of the gospel. Among them was one great man, called Dr Eck. At a Council the Protestants were required to make known their views and the doctrines which they professed, and so they formulated a kind of Confession of Faith. There were many Roman Catholic dukes and princes present, and the

reading of this Confession had such an effect upon them that they confessed they would not have missed being present for anything in the world. One young prince, the Prince of Bavaria, met Dr Eck after the meeting and asked him: "Can you now confute the doctrines contained in that Confession?" Dr Eck answered: "According to the Scriptures, no; but, according to the Fathers and the Councils, yes!" "Oh," said the Duke, "I now see where we stand in the Church of Rome: the Lutherans are *in* the Scriptures, but we are *out* of the Scriptures." And the Duke left the Church of Rome and left Dr Eck. Many more of the leading princes and dukes of Germany also left the Church of Rome and joined the Reformation, after having heard the Confession read at the Council.

The Gospel, then, is the means for the accomplishing of the promise. The Word of the Lord—this book, the Bible—is the means. It is the preaching of the Gospel that the Spirit of God blesses. The Word, of itself, cannot change any sinner, but it is the means in the hands of the Holy Spirit. It has this power, and so the Apostle says, "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It is made effectual by the Spirit in convincing and converting sinners, and in building up believers in the faith. Ah, my friends, let us prize this Book—the Bible. There is great enmity against the Bible in our day, but it is the powerful means by which the kingdom of Satan is destroyed and the kingdom of Christ is advanced; and hence the enmity and hatred of Satan to the blessed Word of God. If he had his way there would not be a Bible in the world, and as he is a spirit he cannot destroy the Bible, so he uses as instruments men who can handle material things, and he

keeps the Bible from the people, or tears it in pieces, or destroys it in every way he can. Satan is afraid of the Bible. Ah, then, my friends, if you got any good from the Bible, take good care of it. When you find it in leaves you ought to bind it up. Why? Ah, it was the means of bringing you to see your need of Christ, and of leading you to the Saviour. Ah, make good use of your Bibles. If you seek for salvation in the Bible, do not say "There is no hope." It is the means of salvation. Read in it the threatenings against sinners that are under the law, that you may be convinced of your sins. When you have got that length, do not despair, for there is mercy in God. That mercy flows to sinners through the blood of His Son, and as long as the invitation of the Gospel is to you, do not despair. Ah, is there even one poor soul in my congregation brought to conviction of sin, brought to cry to God for mercy? After preaching to you for some years now, is my labour in vain? If you find out your miserable condition do not despair: remember there is mercy in God for the chief of sinners.

The glorious subject we have been considering is full of hope, and warrants us to sing with the Psalmist:—

“ His name for ever shall endure;
Last like the sun it shall:
Men shall be bless'd in Him, and bless'd
All nations shall Him call.

Now blessed be the Lord our God,
The God of Israel,
For He alone doth wondrous works,
In glory that excel.

And blessed be His glorious name
To all eternity:
The whole earth let His glory fill.
Amen, so let it be.”

—Psalm lxxii. 17-19 (Metrical Version).

V.

EPISTLES OF CHRIST.

“ Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.”—II. Cor. iii. 3.

THE Apostle here speaks of believers in figurative language. Having spoken of letters of commendation, he tells the Corinthians that those of them who were converted through his instrumentality, and that of his fellow-labourers in the Gospel, were the best letters to commend them as Christ’s ambassadors. “ Ye are our epistle.” They were their epistle as instruments of their conversion, but they were “ the epistle of Christ,” as He was the Author of that important change. The word *epistle* is the Greek name for “ letter.”

In addressing you from the words of our text, as the Lord may enable me, I shall keep to the metaphor the Apostle uses here in comparing believers to an epistle or a letter, and I shall mention as I proceed the various things suggested by the figure.

I.—The *Writer*. No letter is written without a writer. We have several epistles in the New Testament, and, as a rule, the names of the authors of these epistles are given. There are epistles by Paul, epistles by Peter, epistles by John, and one by Jude. Who is the writer of the epistles mentioned in our text? The writer is Christ, for the Apostle calls

believers "the epistle of Christ." But it may be objected that the Apostle says that the epistle is written "by the Spirit of the living God." That is true, but men in high positions in the world have their secretaries to write their letters. The earthly king has his secretary for that purpose. He may write some of his letters with his own hand, but he writes the most of them through his secretary, and those written by his secretary are all the same the king's letters. Christ has His secretary, so to speak, to write His spiritual epistles. Who is that secretary? It is the Holy Spirit, called in our text "the Spirit of the living God." The secretary of an earthly king is inferior to the king himself, but not so here. The Holy Spirit is the "same in substance, and equal in power and glory" with Christ. In the arrangement of the everlasting covenant Christ became the Servant of the Father to work out everlasting redemption, and the Spirit was given to Christ to apply His redemption to those given Him in the covenant. Hence the Spirit is called "the Spirit of Christ." It is to be borne in mind that Christ employs the Spirit in writing His epistles, not as an instrument but as an Agent.

II.—*The Pen.* In writing a letter a pen is necessary. However good a writer you may be you cannot write without a pen. Christ uses means and instruments in carrying on His work in the world. What are the pens He uses in writing the epistles under consideration? The prophets of old were His pens, the Apostles were pens, and all Gospel ministers, and others, are His pens. In the 45th Psalm the Psalmist calls himself a pen in the hand of the Spirit: "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer" (verse 2). The Psalmist here calls his tongue a pen. The tongue is necessary to speak; necessary to

preach the Gospel. The tongue was given to man to declare God's glory, though many employ that member of the body in the service of sin. You need not only a pen but a *good* pen in order to make good writing; you cannot make good writing with a bad pen. Christ always writes with a good pen. He never writes His epistles with a bad pen. His ministers were by nature bad—"the children of wrath even as others," but Christ made them good. You know that pens are made. In my younger days pens were made of quills. How were they made? They were made by the writer himself with a sharp tool called "the pen-knife." What is the pen-knife which Christ employs to make His pens? He employs His own Word—a two-edged sword—cutting both ways—Law and Gospel. By this sharp instrument, in the hand of the Spirit, He prepares His ministering servants to serve Him in the ministry of the Gospel. You cannot make a good pen of a bad quill, but Christ can make good ministers of the worst of men. He made persecuting Saul one of the best ministers that ever served Him in His Church on earth.

Christ does not write all His letters by the same pen. He uses different pens. In Old Testament times He used Prophets; in the New Testament time He used the Apostles and others as His pens; and He still makes new pens to serve His purpose in converting sinners and in building them up in holiness till they are made meet for heaven. When you need a new pen you throw away the old one which served you so long in writing. You throw it away as a useless instrument. But Christ does not treat His old pens—after they have done all the work they were able to do on earth—in that manner. They are more precious to Him than that. He has work for

them to do in heaven. Not, indeed, to write any more letters with them, but to declare His praise for ever. These old pens are perfectly new there. Think of this when you throw away your old pen. Where are the Prophets? Where are the Apostles? Where are the Reformers? Where are the Gospel Ministers that were in Ross-shire fifty years ago? They are in heaven. But Christ makes new pens, and He will continue to do so to the end of time, till all His redeemed are gathered into His fold on earth, and then He shall not make any more pens. His work on earth is "finished"; all His letters are written, and well written.

Each believer is an epistle of Christ, and it is not the same time He takes to write all His letters. He writes some of them in a few minutes. The thief on the cross, whom He saved, is an instance of this. Others might be mentioned who were effectually called, justified, adopted, and sanctified like that thief in a very short space of time. On the other hand, Christ takes many years to finish some of His letters—some 40 years, some 50 years, and some 60 years. We have an account of aged Christians who were in the state of grace for the period of sixty years; and in Old Testament times there were some in that state for several hundred years, and Christ was writing these epistles all that time.

III.—Another thing you require in writing a letter is *ink*. Although you would try to write with a pen without ink, you could not do so. The dry pen would not leave a word or a sentence behind it. Ink is necessary in writing a letter. What is the ink Christ uses in writing His own letters? We are not to guess in this matter. We must go to "the law and to the testimony" for the answer. Well, what is the means the Holy Spirit

takes in His work of applying the benefits of Christ's redemption to sinners? You say, "The Word of God." That is the correct answer. Then, the Word of God is the ink. As you dip your pen in the ink in order to write, so Christ dips, so to speak, His ministering servants, who are His pens, into the Scriptures—into the Word of God. "The entrance of Thy Word gives light." Christ leads His ministers into the meaning of God's Word, and opens their understanding to understand the Scriptures. And then He uses them as His pens to write, and the mark of the ink—God's Word—is left behind on the hearers of the Gospel to whom the Word is blessed, and that through them, as pens in the hand of the Spirit. If you are Christ's epistles, you bear on your soul the mark of God's Word. The Word of Christ dwells in you in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. The saving work of the Spirit agrees with the Word of God. And the work that does not agree with that Word is a delusion—a delusion under which the great majority of professing Christians in the present age are. But we are speaking about the ink in which the pen must be dipped before it can write. There are *fountain pens*. These pens have a small fountain of ink in them. So have Christ's ministers; they have the Word of God in them. Christ gave them that Word. "I have given them the words which Thou gavest Me, and they have received them" (John xvii. 8). But as the supply of ink in the fountain pen does not last always for the work it has to do, and it requires a new supply again and again in order to write, so it is with ministers. They feel themselves sometimes dry without the ink of God's Word; they cannot sometimes find even a text of Scripture to preach from. In that condition

they cannot preach. If you begin to write with a dry pen, you injure both the pen and the paper on which you write. In like manner, if ministers preach when they are thus dry, they hurt their own feelings and the feelings of the Lord's people, and they would rather not have preached at all in that *dry* frame of mind. This will teach them to cry to Christ for a new supply of His blessed Word. When they get that in answer to prayer, they shall then say with the Psalmist: "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer." Their own souls are benefited by their preaching, and the "poor and needy" are refreshed with the dew from on high, and fed with "the bread of life."

IV.—Another thing you need in writing a letter is *paper*. What is the paper on which Christ writes? The Apostle tells us. It is the *heart*. "Not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." The material of which writing paper is made undergoes a great change before it is fit for writing purposes. Of what material is it made? Some say that writing paper is made of *old rags*. However that may be, it is a fact that the heart of man by nature is much worse than old rags. It is spoken of in God's Word as "filthy rags." "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah lxiv. 6). This being the case, the heart of man must undergo a great process of preparation before it can be used by Christ to write upon. The tables of stone on which God wrote the law were first prepared for that purpose. They were hewn by Moses with a chisel, dressed and prepared, and then God engraved the law upon them with His own hand (Exodus xxxiv. 1). The writing was the writing of God, but He used Moses as His instrument to prepare the tables. In

like manner, God uses the law, of which Moses was the representative, in preparing the heart of the sinner. Indeed, He uses law and Gospel in that work. The law is the chisel that cuts and wounds, the Gospel is the polishing instrument whereby the heart is finally prepared for writing on. The change necessary is spoken of in Scripture as "a new creation," a taking away of the stony heart, and giving a heart of flesh. This is done in the case of every sinner that is saved by the effectual work of the Holy Spirit, and the Apostle speaks of it in our text. He says that the writing is made "not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." The natural heart is not only corrupt, but also hard as a stone, while the new heart is soft and tender as flesh. There is a heart of stone in all men by nature, but Christ by His Spirit effects such a wonderful change in His own people that they have now a tender heart. This is then the paper on which Christ writes. He does not write upon it as it is by nature. He changes it: as the material on which paper is made is changed by the manufacturer, so is the heart changed by the Spirit of God.

One thing more before I leave this part of the subject. You buy the paper you use in writing a letter. What is the price you pay for it? "Not much," you say: "I can get a packet of paper for one penny." Ah, Christ did not buy His paper at such a cheap rate as that. What did He give for it? He gave Himself, He gave His precious blood, He gave His obedience unto death. Oh, what a price! The wonder is intensified when you bear in mind that it was when His people were like "old filthy rags" He bought them at such a cost. If the stationer were to offer you old rags for your penny instead of fine white paper, you would refuse to buy such

stuff. But Christ did not refuse to buy His people when there was nothing in them but sin. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans v. 8).

V.—We now come to *the writing*. A letter is something written. You all know what it is to write a letter. What is the first thing you write in a letter? You write the *name* of the place from which it is written. If you write a letter in this town, the first thing you write is "Dingwall." In like manner, the first thing Christ writes in His own letter is the *name* of the place. Where does He write His letters? In His Church on earth. He writes all His letters there, and as He writes all His letters there, He writes first the name of the place. And, therefore, He says, in Rev. iii. 12, "I will write upon him (the believer) the name of the city of my God." Zion is the name of the city of God. It is there the Holy Spirit converts sinners, and prepares them for glory. In the eighty-seventh Psalm and fifth verse we read:—

"And it of Zion shall be said,
This man and that man there
Was born; and He that is Most High
Himself shall stablish her.

When God the people writes, He'll count
That this man born was there.
There be that sing and play; and all
My well-springs in thee are."

The second thing you write is the *date*. You write the *day*, the *month*, and the *year*. Christ does the same. The date of the sinner's conversion is written down by Him. The people of Israel were commanded to remember the month *Abib* as the time of their deliverance out of their bondage in Egypt. In the 22nd chapter of Acts we find the Apostle Paul telling the date of his conver-

sion. Not only that he could tell the day, but the exact *hour* in which the great change took place. It was, he says, "about noon," when the sun was at its meridian height, shining brightly, indicating, as it were, that the new convert was to be "a burning and a shining light" in the Church, as really he was. Not only that Christ knew the *date* of Paul's conversion, and wrote it down, but Paul himself knew it, and probably wrote it down in his diary as a time to be remembered. Some of the Lord's people remember the *day* of their conversion, others remember the *month*, and others the *year*. Those who know the time of their conversion have, what may be called an *anniversary*. Some observe an anniversary of their birth—their natural birth—and they have on that occasion a feast and rejoicing. The Lord's people—some of them—observe an anniversary of their *new birth*, and they feast and rejoice in the company of Christ, who comes to them to remind them of His loving-kindness to them in saving them. Some poor one may now say, "I am afraid I am not one of the Lord's people because I cannot tell the *date* of my conversion, though I cannot deny that a change came over me, and that Christ is precious to me, and that His people are my people, and His cause is my cause." But you are to remember that you are not the writer of the epistle at all, but Christ. He knows the date, and wrote it down. If you bear the marks of His people in other respects as you do by the confession you have just now made, you need not be so much perplexed about the date. If you see a tree growing and bearing good fruit, you may be sure that it was planted some time, though you cannot tell *when*. There are some of the Lord's people in whom the work of grace begins so small, like the little leaven in

the parable, that they cannot tell *when* the leavening process began till the whole lump of the *dry meal* is leavened. By their *fruit* they are known. There is, however, in the case of all God's people, a certain period of their life in which they turned from sin to God, a time of their conversion, a time of their embracing Christ by faith, a time when they enjoy spiritual comfort from the Word of God in the private and public means of grace, though some of them are for the most part during their lifetime kept in darkness about their interest in Christ. Such have the *faith of adherence*, but want the *faith of assurance*. They cannot say, "My beloved is mine, and I am His," but they can say, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Let us now come to consider what is written in the body of the letter. You do not finish a letter by stating by your pen the *place* and *date* of writing. That is only a beginning. Neither does Christ. For "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it"—bring it to perfection. What more does Christ write? Well, to put it briefly, He writes His law in the minds and hearts of His people. He draws by His Spirit and Word the image of God, which was effaced by sin, on their souls again, never to be obliterated any more for ever. He restores that which He took not away. The law of God was written on the soul of man at his creation. By sin he lost that treasure. Christ regained it at a great cost, and He restores it to His redeemed people. It was a token for good that this was to be done when the law was written on tables of stone. It intimated that although their hearts by nature were as hard as the stone, yet they would be so changed that the law would be written again on them. I have already spoken of the change that was

made by the Spirit in the souls of God's people by making them a "new creation." Their state was changed by the Father when He justified them. But their change of nature is effected by the Spirit. They are perfect in their justification, as perfect as ever they shall be. But they are not perfect in their sanctification. That work is only begun. When God created man he was perfect in His image all at once ; God's image was not put on him by degrees. But in restoring the image of God to His redeemed, the work of the Spirit is gradual. It is a change "into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. iii. 18)—that is, from one degree of sanctification to another. This work shall be carried on gradually by the Spirit till they are made perfect in holiness at death. They shall then be, with respect to their souls, as perfect in their sanctification as they are now on earth in their justification. This is, in short, the writing that Christ makes in the body of His epistle.

Before I proceed to notice the last thing that He writes in the letter I may remark that all Christ's letters are *public* letters, so that, as Paul says, they may be read and known of all men (verse 2). Public letters are open to all men, and all may read them. There is nothing in Christ's letters, so far as His *writing* is concerned, that needs to be concealed. It can stand the light of day, and the gaze of all men, good and bad. Christians are not shut up in monasteries and nunneries, where their fellow-creatures cannot see them, but are public in the world, and associate with their fellowmen in their lawful callings, so that all may see them. They may be read and known of all men, as it is written, "All that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed" (Isaiah lxi. 9). Even

their enemies were constrained to acknowledge this. We have an account in history of those who burnt some of the Lord's people at the stake confessing afterwards that those they so cruelly put to death were God's people. They were compelled by the force of conscience to make this confession, though their enmity to God and His people impelled them to continue in their persecuting work. How may those who are Christ's letter be read and known? You cannot see Christ's writing, for it is inward in the heart or soul. The work of the Spirit is there. "The kingdom of heaven is within you." But grace in the heart manifests itself outwardly. You may read and know them in their lives—in their holy walk and conversation in the world. They were thus read and known in all generations. They are "*manifestly* the epistle of Christ." Their conduct is manifest to all, though grace in the heart is invisible to creatures. The eye of God only can see it.

What is the last thing you write in a letter? You write your *name*, so that the person to whom you write may know from whom the letter is. Christ does the same. He writes His name. So He says Himself. "I will write upon him My new name" (Rev. iii. 12). There are anonymous letters, but none of Christ's letters are anonymous. He writes His name; He owns the letter as His. His name is a *new* name. As the Saviour, a new name was given Him, and this new name is "Jesus." "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Luke ii. 21). He signs the letter by His name "Jesus."

After you write your name in the letter, what more do you do? You enclose it in an envelope. So does

Christ. After He has finished, by His Spirit, the work of sanctification in His people, He will at death enclose them in His own envelope, so that they are no more to be seen in their persons in this world, or read or known by their fellow-creatures on earth except by their memory.

After you enclose your letter in an envelope, what more do you do? You write the name and address of the person to whom you wrote the letter, on the back of the envelope. So does Christ. To whom does he write these letters? To His Father. What is the Father's address? Heaven. "Our Father who art in heaven." Do you do anything more before despatching your letter? Yes, you put a postage stamp on the envelope. What kind of a stamp do you put on? One bearing the image of the king. So does Christ. His own image is the postage stamp He puts on all His letters. That insures their safe arrival at their destination. The royal stamp is enough to pay cost of carriage to any part of our kingdom. It is enough for the carriage of believers to the kingdom of glory. He who made them His epistles put that stamp upon them. It is the writer, and not the letter itself, that puts the postage stamp on the letter.

The last thing you have to do now is to send away your letter. How do you do this? You either post it in the post office or hand it to the letter-carrier. Well, it is the latter way Christ takes to send away His own letters. He does not put them in the post office, to lie there for any time. He hands them at once, without any delay, to His letter-carriers. Who are these? They are the holy angels. We read that these angels carried the soul of Lazarus to heaven as soon as he died (Luke xvi. 22). The holy angels are waiting at the death-bed of God's people to carry their souls to heaven when

Christ hands them to them immediately after death. The angels are thus waiting, just as you see postmen waiting at the Dingwall Post Office to receive letters which they are to carry to their destination, according to address. On the other hand, evil angels are waiting at the death-bed of the unconverted, to carry their souls to hell as soon as they die! As soon as Christ hands His letters to the holy angels, they set off at once, and although the distance they have to travel is so long—no man can tell how long—their motion is so swift, and their errand so delightful, that they are at the end of their journey in a very short time. The time is so short that it is but “to be absent from the body and present with the Lord,” as Paul speaks of it. “As it does not yet appear what we shall be,” we cannot at present enter within the vail to behold the happy reception the Father gives to the letters of His beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased. Let each of us seek to be the epistle of Christ.

THE EPISTLE OF SATAN.

As people are at times cheated by spurious letters, it will be proper, in conclusion, to give a word of warning on the subject. Satan, in order to deceive, transforms himself into an angel of light, and in that shape he writes letters—(I keep to the metaphor)—purporting to be written by Christ, and by this device he deceives many, especially in this age. Do you ask, “How can I distinguish between Satan’s letters and Christ’s letters?” There is a great difference between them. Take the following marks of distinction:—

1. The handwriting of Satan is different from that of Christ’s. A letter-forgery tries to imitate as much as

possible the hand-writing of the person in whose name he writes. But if you receive a letter from a forger, purporting to be written by your friend, whose hand-writing you know so well, you may know at once that the letter was not written by your friend. In like manner, you who know the handwriting of Christ will not be too readily deceived by Satan, however he may try to imitate the handwriting of Christ. The hand-writing of Christ is inimitable. As no creature ever spoke like Christ, so no creature ever wrote like Him.

2. The *pens* that Satan uses in writing his letters are quite different from those Christ uses in writing His own letters. While Christ employs *converted* ministers for that purpose, Satan employs *unconverted* ministers as his instruments to do his own deceptive work. When, in an evil age, the enemy sends forth a host of ministers from his college to deceive congregations, he “transforms them into the apostles of Christ” (2 Cor. xi. 13). Under that disguise he knows that his messengers are more readily received by ignorant people than if he had sent them forth in their natural form. He has thousands and tens of thousands of ministers of this description in the present day, so that congregations need to be on their guard lest they be deceived. “Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. iii. 2, 3).

3. There is a difference in the *ink*. The *Word of God* is the ink Christ uses to write His letters; the *word of man* is the ink Satan uses to write his own, and if he dips his pen sometimes in Scripture, it is in order to

deceive. Although he quotes Scripture to suit his purpose, yet he often misquotes it, and always gives a wrong interpretation of it. His key to expound Scripture is not Scripture itself, but the *opinions* of men. How much of this way of interpreting Scripture is to be seen among Satan's ministers in our own day!

4. There is a difference in the *paper*. To speak plainly, while Christ prepares His people by regeneration in order to write His image upon them, Satan makes good Christians of his own children without that essential change, without which no man can enter the kingdom of heaven (John iii. 3). Or if he acknowledges that such a change is necessary, he will tell them that they were "born again" when they were baptised. He deludes some of his subjects by making them believe that man did not fall from the state in which God created him, and that therefore all men shall go to heaven after they leave this world. Some of his ministers, who are his pens, declare openly that it is "difficult," if not impossible, for man in his state of nature "to go wrong." In their view, under the teaching of Satan, men are good enough as they are born into the world, and there is no need of the regenerating work of the Spirit to make them better. This is the kind of material on which Satan writes his epistles.

5. There is a difference between what Satan writes in his letter and what Christ writes in His own. (1) With regard to the *place* of writing. Although it would appear that the *place* is common to both writers, viz., the *Church*, yet we learn from Scripture that the place from which Satan writes is different from Christ's. For we read of a place of worship, which was called by men a

Church, called by Christ “the synagogue of Satan.” It is by calling his place of writing the *Church* Satan deceives many. If he gave its appropriate name—“the synagogue of Satan”—people would not be deceived by him. But as he is a forger, he pretends to write from *Zion*, Christ’s writing place. But from what has been already pointed out, it is clear that Satan’s place of writing and Christ’s are different, although the evil one performs his work of deception with more plausibility within the pale of what is called the “Visible Church.”

(2) With respect to *date*, that is, the date of conversion. Satan has his converts as well as Christ. Does he convert sinners to himself? There is no need for that, for he has all from their birth. But you are to bear in mind that he pretends to convert sinners to God, and he knows that by his way of conversion he has a firmer hold of them than before their conversion. At what date are Satan’s converts converted? In the case of some of them they are converted when they are baptised; others are converted when they partake of the symbols of the Lord’s body and blood in the Sacrament of the Supper; others are converted when they give up the grosser forms of sin and become moderate in their habits; and so on. But in all these ways of conversion Satan may reckon his converts as his own still, and, as already stated, he has a firmer hold of them than he had before their conversion.

(3) With regard to what is written in the body of the letter. While Christ writes His own holy image on His people—implanting in them the graces of the Spirit, working spiritual thoughts, desires, and affections, which lead to corresponding actions—the devil is so far content to see his image still remaining on his own people under

the cloak of a Christian profession. His image is on them from the womb. But although they are born into the world bearing his image, yet he may be said to still write his image on them deeper and deeper, inasmuch as he works in them, prompting them, by manifold temptations, to actual transgression, which more and more blinds the eyes of the mind, hardens the heart, sears the conscience, and corrupts the affections. Thus evil men wax worse and worse in their *nature* as well as in their *practice*.

(4) Satan's epistles are *public* epistles as well as Christ's, and may be read and known of all men. "The children of the devil are *manifest*," as well as the children of God (1 John iii. 10). How may they be read and known? You cannot see what is in their heart except as it manifests itself outwardly in their actions; and as they profess the Christian religion, and perform religious exercises, you are to look at them in that aspect of their character in order to know them. Follow them to their places of worship, and observe *how* they worship. Some of them adhere to the outward form of worship instituted by Christ in His Church, but as they were not regenerated by the Spirit, they know nothing of the *power* of godliness, and consequently they rest in the mere outward form, without seeking to worship God in the spirit and to hold fellowship with Him. They have gone through the outward form exactly as prescribed by the Head of the Church, and they are satisfied with that. These we call *Formalists*. But there is another class of Satan's converts (and they form the great majority of present-day worshippers bearing the Christian name) who have, to a large extent, ceased to worship God in the manner prescribed by Himself because they consider

it antiquated, and have invented another way more agreeable to the carnal mind. What these aim at in their worship is not to please God but to please themselves. You have only to read newspaper reports of their religious services and you will see that these so-called worshippers have usurped the place of God as the object of worship. These we call *Self-worshippers*.

By these, among many other marks, they may be read and known of all, except such as are under judicial blindness. As there are multitudes of our fellow-creatures illiterate, who cannot read—not a few still in our own kingdom—there are many more who have no spiritual discernment to distinguish between true Christians and the great multitude who are so only in name. But the people of God, who are taught of Himself, are able to make the distinction; and while they cannot associate with false worshippers in their religious services, they pity them, and give glory to God who made themselves to differ.

(5) There is a difference in the *signature* adhibited to the letter when it is finished. As already stated, Christ writes His own name at the end of His letter, as the author of all that was written in it. Satan does not sign his own name, but, as a forger, he signs the name of Christ. And how can it be proved that the letter has never been written by Christ, though His name is to it? It can be proved, *first*, by the great difference there is between the *handwriting* of Christ and that of the forger. However Satan may try to imitate Christ's writing, he cannot do it, for it is *inimitable*. *Second*, by *internal evidence*. Spurious letters are proved to be ungentine by this test. There are writings attributed to some of the fathers who succeeded the apostles in the

Christian Church which have been proved to be spurious by internal evidence. By comparing these writings with other writings which were well known to have been written by those fathers, it was found that they did not agree, and therefore it was concluded, on good evidence, that the fathers to whom these writings were attributed were not the authors of them. On the same principle, when you compare what Christ has written in His own epistle—His work of grace in the souls of His people—with what Satan has written (including the signature) in his own epistle, you will find that they do not agree; on the contrary, that there is as much difference between them as there is between light and darkness. But as a deceiver of souls, Satan makes his dupes believe that his work in them is the genuine work of the Spirit of God, and he keeps them under this delusion till he gets them with him down in the pit of destruction.

(6) Satan imitates Christ in addressing his letters to *God, the Father in heaven*; but if he should, through temporary failure of memory, omit to write this address on them, he has agents in his service who will, through the telegraph of prayer, wire the address to eternity when burying the dead. These agents are so full of false charity that they send all men to heaven, making no difference “between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not” (Mal. iii. 18).

(7) There is a difference in the *postage stamp*. The stamp Christ puts on His own letters is, as already mentioned, His own holy image, in which His people are made perfect at death, so far as their souls are concerned: but the stamp Satan affixes to his letters is a

counterfeit—an imitation of Christ's image in one form or another, as suits his purpose in deceiving immortal souls. So long as he sees that his postage stamp is different from Christ's stamp, he is content to allow his dupes to pass on to eternity in the hope of entering heaven, while he knows that hell is their place of abode for ever !

(8) Lastly, there is a difference in the *letter-carriers*. Holy angels are Christ's letter-carriers. They carry the souls of believers to heaven immediately after their death ; but evil angels, of whom he is the prince, are Satan's letter-carriers, and they carry the souls of all the wicked—that is, all that die in an unregenerate state—to hell as soon as they die. As there are two classes of men in the world—the righteous and the wicked—there are two places (and two only) in eternity—heaven and hell ; and the souls of the former class shall go to heaven, and the souls of the latter class shall go to hell immediately after death, and both parties shall remain in their respective places for ever and ever : the one party enjoying perfect blessedness in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity, the other party enduring the greatest misery for ever.

I have in this lecture spoken of these two classes under the titles of “ the epistle of Christ ” and “ the epistle of Satan.” I now appeal to you, in the name of God, to examine yourselves as to which of these epistles you are. You must be either Christ's epistle or Satan's. There is no intermediate position for you to stand in between these two. There are a few of you of whom I am persuaded that you are the epistles of Christ, but the larger number of you by far are still in

your natural state, and if you continue in that state till death, Satan shall claim you as his own, and the justice of God shall see to it that you shall have your portion with him in everlasting torment. But you are still in the land of the living, where mercy may be found, and where God waits to be gracious to sinners that come to Him by Christ as the way; and we beseech you in Christ's stead, "Be ye reconciled to God" on the ground of Christ's atonement. Oh, seek by earnest prayer that the Holy Spirit make you, by His effectual and saving work, the epistle of Christ, that you may live to His glory during your time on earth, and that when you die you may be carried by the holy angels to heaven, to be for ever with the Lord.

VI.

A PLEASURE-LOVING AGE: CHILDREN AT
THEATRICALS.

“ Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night.”—*Isaiah xxi. 11, 12.*

IN Old Testament times the prophets were called watchmen. The Lord said to Ezekiel, “ Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel.” A watchman’s duties were to watch while others slept, and to give them timely warning should any danger threaten their persons or their interests. If the sentinel neglected his duty, if he slept when he ought to watch, his punishment was death, because he failed to give warning of the enemy’s approach. Truly such would be the fate of all ministers who professed to be watchmen on the walls of Zion, and yet neglected to warn the people of approaching danger. If one of the false prophets of old were asked, “ Watchman, what of the night?” his answer would be, “ Peace, peace, no danger,” while the enemies were at the very door. The same held true of most ministers of the present day. Truly the night was not only coming, but had already come. It had come not only on the world, but on the visible church as well, so that in comparatively few pulpits in Scotland was the Gospel preached to-day. A passing reference might be made by ministers to Christ

and the Gospel, but they failed to declare the whole counsel of God.

Instead of seeking to please God, their great aim was to please their congregations, but they would have their reward. The night that succeeded the giving of the first promise in Eden was a dark one, and in particular the generation that immediately preceded the destruction of the old world by the flood was an exceedingly wicked generation. There was none righteous to be found among them but Noah. Instead of worshipping the one and only true God they worshipped false gods, and there was one false god in particular that was the object of their adoration, viz., what might be termed the Epicurean *god of pleasure*. They were eating and drinking, playing and dancing, and amusing themselves till they were all swept away by the flood. How similar our own age to that! Most of the people of the present day worshipped at the shrine of that false god of pleasure. The altar of that god was set up in all parts of our land: in towns, in villages, and in country places: yea, in the very house of God, so that ministers, instead of feeding their flocks from the Word of God with knowledge and understanding, served them with carnal amusements, and to perpetuate the worship of that false god young children were carefully trained up to it. One form of pleasure-worship was theatrical plays, and such were practised in their own town. The teachers of those performances and all who countenanced them would be (though not intentionally) the means of destroying the souls of the performers. As he loved the young, and sought their salvation, he would earnestly beseech them to flee from the destroyers of their souls, and to come to Christ, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto

Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

Those who taught theatrical performances to little children forbade them to come to Christ. He felt in duty bound to speak of those matters when answering the question, “What of the night?” He sought to come to the rescue of the rising generation that he might pluck them out of the hands of their destroyers. The teachers of these performances might mean well, but he had no doubt that the effect of their teaching would prove destructive to the precious souls of their pupils, and that the blood of many lost souls would be required of them at the day of judgment! If they did not believe this in a day of mercy, they would have to believe it by terrible experience when it was too late. Parents who allowed their children to frequent such evil institutions showed how devoid they were of true love to their offspring, and how sadly they neglected the solemn vows they came under when they received the ordinance of baptism for their children. The divine injunction to parents and other teachers of the young is: “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Prov. xxii. 6). “When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay” (Eccl. v. 4, 5). How many parents in the present day were under the curse of broken vows! They made a noise if they were refused baptism for their children, but as for the solemn vows under which they came, they treated them with perfect indifference, though the neglect of their duty was nothing less than the sin of perjury!

It was one of the signs of the ungodliness of the present generation that ladies and gentlemen of high rank were principal promoters of theatrical entertainments and other amusements, which would have the effect of counteracting the labours of Gospel ministers in instructing the people—young and old—in the things which belonged to their everlasting peace. He would say to those high personages: “Cease from your evil work: allow the Gospel free course that it may be glorified in the salvation of immortal souls.”

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

THE DECLARATORY ACT OF 1892.

WHEREAS it is expedient to remove difficulties and scruples which have been felt by some in reference to the declaration of belief required from persons who receive licence or are admitted to office in this Church, the General Assembly, with consent of Presbyteries, declare as follows:

That, in holding and teaching, according to the Confession, the Divine purpose of grace towards those who are saved, and the execution of that purpose in time, this Church most earnestly proclaims, as standing in the forefront of the revelation of Grace, the love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to sinners of mankind, manifested especially in the Father's gift of the Son to be the Saviour of the world, in the coming of the Son to offer Himself a propitiation for sin, and in the striving of the Holy Spirit with men to bring them to repentance.

That this Church also holds that all who hear the Gospel are warranted and required to believe to the saving of their souls; and that in the case of such as do not believe, and perish in their sins, the issue is due to their own rejection of the Gospel call. That this Church does not teach, and does not regard the Confession as teaching, the fore-ordination of men to death irrespective of their own sin.

That it is the duty of those who believe, and one end of their calling by God, to make known the Gospel to all

men everywhere for the obedience of faith. And that while the Gospel is the ordinary means of salvation for those to whom it is made known, yet it does not follow, nor is the Confession to be held as teaching, that any who die in infancy are lost, or that God may not extend His mercy, for Christ's sake, and by His Holy Spirit, to those who are beyond the reach of these means, as it may seem good to Him, according to the riches of His grace.

That, in holding and teaching, according to the Confession of Faith, the corruption of man's whole nature as fallen, this Church also maintains that there remain tokens of his greatness as created in the image of God; that he possesses a knowledge of God and of duty; that he is responsible for compliance with the moral law and with the Gospel: and that, although unable without the aid of the Holy Spirit to return to God, he is yet capable of affections and actions which, in themselves, are virtuous and praiseworthy.

That this Church disclaims intolerant or persecuting principles, and does not consider her office-bearers, in subscribing to the Confession, committed to any principles inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment.

That while diversity of opinion is recognised in this Church on such points in the Confession as do not enter into the substance of the Reformed Faith therein set forth, the Church retains full authority to determine, in any case which may arise, what points fall within this description, and thus to guard against any abuse of this liberty to the detriment of sound doctrine, or to the injury of her unity and peace.

APPENDIX II.

DEED OF SEPARATION.

WE, the undersigned Ministers and Elders of the Free Church of Scotland, considering that the constitution of said Church as settled in 1843 is contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, as approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1647, the First and Second Books of Discipline, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Claim, Declaration, and Protest of 1842, the Protest of 1843, the Act of Separation and Deed of Demission executed in the last mentioned year, the Formula appointed to be subscribed by probationers before receiving license, and by all office-bearers at the time of their admission, together with the Questions appointed to be put to the same parties at Ordination and Admission, and the Acts of Assembly of the Church of Scotland prior to 1843; and, further considering that the Establishment Principle—that is the national recognition and encouragement of religion and the Church of Christ by the State as such—is part of the Constitution of the Free Church of Scotland as settled in 1843, and since repeatedly affirmed in Acts and Proceedings of her General Assemblies, and that the maintenance of said Principle is binding and obligatory on all Ministers and Office-bearers of said Church; and now seeing (1st) That the present subsisting Church now calling herself the Free Church of Scotland, through majorities of her Commissioners in General Assembly met, has, in violation of one of the fundamental principles embodied in the Constitution of

the Free Church of Scotland, of late years repeatedly passed resolutions having for their object the separation of Church and State, and the abandonment of the distinctive testimony of the Free Church of Scotland in favour of a national recognition of religion, and that without any declaration in favour of any Scheme for the Reconstruction of a National Church on the basis claimed by the Church of Scotland in 1842; (2) That the present subsisting Church, calling herself the Free Church of Scotland, by sanctioning the use of uninspired hymns, has departed from the original Standards of the Free Church of Scotland; and by the authorisation of instrumental music in the public worship of God has altered the ancient and universal practice of the Church of Scotland, and violated the purity of worship as understood by the Free Church of Scotland in 1846; (3rd) That the said present subsisting Church, calling herself the Free Church of Scotland, through judgments of her General Assemblies, now not only tolerates but supports office-bearers who do not hold the "whole doctrine" of the Confession of Faith—especially the doctrine of the Divine Authorship and entire perfection of all the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which "whole doctrine" by their ordination vows said office-bearers vowed and declared to be the true doctrine which they would constantly adhere to; (4th) That by passing the Declaratory Act of (1892) the said present subsisting Church, calling herself the Free Church of Scotland, through her General Assemblies, has, in so far as said Church is concerned, destroyed the integrity of the Confession of Faith as understood and accepted by the Disruption Fathers and their predecessors, and instead of the Westminster Confession of Faith as the

recognised Standard of orthodoxy in the Church, in all its heads and articles, has substituted what is called “the Substance of the Reformed Faith therein set forth,” the Church, through the majorities of the Members of her Courts, being by the said Declaratory Act made the sole judge of the particular points that are to be included under this category of doctrines—a provision which overthrows the fixed Doctrinal Constitution of the Free Church of Scotland, and lays its Creed at the feet of an irresponsible majority to determine the same as it will; and (5th) That the majority of the Ministers and Elders who for the present rule and guide the said present subsisting Church, calling herself the Free Church of Scotland, have, in the instances above set forth, abandoned one of the most vital principles of the Free Church of Scotland; have practically embraced Voluntaryism; and have passed Acts and Resolutions under which the Standards of the Free Church of Scotland can be, and are violated; whereby they have ceased to represent the Church of Scotland as settled in 1843. In consequence whereof we resolved to separate from the said present subsisting Church calling herself the Free Church of Scotland; therefore, and in order the more formally and to effectually carry out said resolution, we, the Ministers and Elders, hereto subscribing for ourselves and all who may now or hereafter adhere to us—under the solemn declaration that we and they now adhere as we and they have heretofore done to the Constitution and Standards of the Free Church of Scotland as settled in 1843, and set forth in the several documents above named, and to the whole principles therein embodied—and in humble dependence on the Grace of God, the help of our Lord and Saviour, and the presence

and blessing of the Holy Spirit have separated, as we do hereby separate, from the present subsisting Church, calling herself the Free Church of Scotland ; declaring, however, as we hereby specially provide and declare that we for ourselves, and all who may now or hereafter adhere to us, in no degree abandon or impair the rights belonging to us as Ministers of Christ's Gospel and Pastors and Elders of particular congregations, to perform freely and fully the functions of our offices towards our respective congregations or such portion thereof as may adhere to us ; That signature or adherence to this Deed of Separation shall in no way prejudice our right to maintain the Doctrines and Principles of the Free Church of Scotland as set forth in her Authorised Standards and authoritative documents as recognised and understood in 1843, and to take all steps that may be necessary to vindicate said Doctrines and Principles ; That we are and shall be free to exercise government and discipline in our several judicatories separate from the said Church, according to God's Word and the Constitution and Standards of the Free Church of Scotland as understood in 1843 ; that henceforth we are not and shall not be subject in any respect to the ecclesiastical judicatories of the said present subsisting Church calling herself the Free Church of Scotland ; That the rights and benefits accruing to the Ministers subscribing or who may hereafter adhere hereto in connection with the Free Church of Scotland Ministers' and Missionaries' Widows' and Orphans' Fund are hereby reserved ; That this Deed of Separation shall no ways be held as a renunciation on the part of such of said Ministers as are Ministers of Churches or occupants of Mansees built by private contribution, or of any rights which may be

found to belong to such Ministers or to their congregations or to the office-bearers of such congregations, or to existing or future Trustees on behalf of such congregations or their Kirk-Sessions in regard to the same, by virtue of the intentions and destination of the contributors to the erection of said Churches and Manses, and to the acquisition of any lands thereto attached or otherwise according to law; and that there is hereby specially reserved to us, the subscribers hereto, and to all who may now or hereafter adhere to us, power and authority to take all steps that may be necessary to vindicate our or their status, and all advantages, rights and privileges, both sacred and civil, of whatever nature and description whatsoever, which may righteously be found to belong to us and to those who, by adhering to her Constitution and Standards as settled in 1843, claim to represent the Free Church of Scotland, and we consent to the registration hereof for preservation.

In testimony whereof, these presents, written on stamped paper by Æneas Fraser, Clerk to Innes & Mackay, Solicitors, Inverness, are subscribed by Mr Donald MacFarlane, Minister at Raasay; Mr Donald MacDonald, Minister at Shielraig, and Alex. MacFarlane, Teacher of the Public School at Raasay, Elder, all at Portree on the fourteenth day of August, 1893, before these witnesses—John Robertson MacKay, Preacher of the Gospel at Gairloch, and Allan MacKenzie, Student of Divinity, residing at Inverness.

(Signed) Donald MacFarlane, Minister.
 „ Donald MacDonald, Minister.
 „ Alex. MacFarlane, Elder.

(Signed) John R. MacKay, Witness.
 „ Allan MacKenzie, Witness.

APPENDIX III.

LIST OF MR MACFARLANE'S PUBLISHED
WRITINGS.

Memoirs and Remains of Rev. D. MacDonald, Shildaig
(Glasgow: John MacNeilage: 1903).

Sermons on the Love of God and Cognate Themes
(Inverness: *Chronicle* Office: 1918).

Pamphlets and Leaflets:

An Exposition of the Seven Seals and the Seven
Vials in the Book of Revelation (Wick: 1912).

Present Day Aspect of Romanism (1911).

Re-Union of Christendom: Open Letter to the Rev.
Principal Whyte (London: 1911).

Protestantism and Romanism Compared.

The Origin of "Easter" and the "Eastward
Position" (leaflet).

The Kikuyu Controversy (leaflet).

Declaratory Act in Court (Inverness: 1928).

Sermons:

Exaltation of Christ: A Sermon (Phil. ii. 9-11).

On II. Cor. v. 10 (Inverness: 1918).

On Joel ii. 12-14 (no date).



